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UNCLE TIMOTHY AND PAUL.—PAGE 5.

UNCLE TIMOTHY TABER;

OR,

THE NEW MINISTER.

A Story for the Old and Young.

BY A SABBATH-SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT.

Alexander Streeter

Alex. S. Arnold,

VALLEY FALLS, R. I.

"Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."—*Prov. xxiii.* 23.

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TO THE MEMORY OF

GRANDPA DEXTER,

OF PAWTUCKET, R. I.,

WHOSE CONSTANT LABORS FOR SIXTY-EIGHT YEARS IN THE SABBATH SCHOOL ENTITLE HIM TO OUR WARMEST GRATITUDE, WHOSE LOVE FOR CHILDREN ENDEARED HIM TO ALL THEIR HEARTS, WHOSE NOBLE CHRISTIAN EXAMPLE EVER COMMANDED THE RESPECT AND ESTEEM OF ALL WHO KNEW HIM, IS THIS LITTLE VOLUME AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

Pawtucket, R. I., August 1, 1868.

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UNCLE TIMOTHY TABER;

OR,

THE NEW MINISTER.

CHAPTER I.

UNCLE TIM AND PAUL.

"THERE comes that scapegrace, Paul Mason," said Uncle Tim to himself, as he sat in his little front shop, pounding away with his accustomed cheerfulness. "I guess he's going to stop here. I wonder if I can't do him some good? Wish I could;" and Uncle Tim gave the leather upon his lapstone a more vigorous blow by way of emphasis. "Why can't boys behave themselves better? But I'm forgetting that I was a boy once, and didn't behave myself any too well, — did I?" and Uncle Tim pounded a little slower to give himself a better opportunity to laugh as he thought of some of his boyish tricks. "Well, well, I think I'm not a bit better than I should be, though I *am* a church-member. I shouldn't wonder if Paul made quite a man yet. But here he comes; guess he'll stop; — looking pretty hard

at the window, and walks slower. Paul, you just come right in, and don't be afraid of anybody," continued the old man to himself, as though that would have great weight with Paul, though the latter could not, of course, hear the words that were simply thoughts. "Going right by. Well, perhaps I'll come across him at some more fitting time. Poor fellow! mother died — let me see — eight years ago; father died six weeks ago, and Paul only thirteen years of age. Father all absorbed in business; child neglected; grows up wild. No wonder! no wonder! Better off without a father to supply him with so much pocket-money that it takes all the time for the poor boy to spend it. No good comes of *such* a policy. But Mr. Mason was a good-hearted man, after all. Ignorance was his great fault. Not ignorance of books, but ignorance of the way to be good to his boy;" and here Uncle Tim drove a peg into a shoe with such force as to send it through the leather to the other side. "Guess I won't find fault, however; for I'm inclined to think much learning will not be liable to make me mad. But there comes Paul back again. I think I'll open the door kind o' accidentally, you know, to throw out this basin of dirty water. But there's no need of that, for he is certainly coming in."

"Good-morning, Paul! good-morning, my boy! Take a seat, — highest seat in the syna-

gogue, — my easy-chair. Didn't know as I had such a comfortable chair, did you? Why, I've owned that chair — let me see — my wife went to glory twenty-five years ago, and I've — didn't mean to call such things to your mind. I love to see you cry, my son; for it shows that you have a good heart. But don't be cast down too much. Your father has gone to be an angel. Why, he would not exchange worlds now if he could. I love to think that my wife went to glory, and is waiting for me; and by and by, my son, we'll go to meet them safe in the promised land."

Here the old man drew his sleeve across his eyes, as he continued, "I remember your mother when a little girl. I recollect of trotting her upon my knee. But she was an angel before she left this world, and so she has simply continued right on. But how are you coming on? I haven't given you a chance to put in a word edgewise."

"Not over and above," said Paul, drying his eyes; "but full as well as I deserve."

"Nonsense! nonsense! my son; we all deserve to do all the good we can, and nothing worth mentioning will befall us to our real injury; for even death is simply the process by which we change worlds."

"Haven't you heard," asked Paul, "that I was turned out of house and home?"

"Turned out of house and home! Hadn't heard a word."

"Well, that's so, Mr. Taber."

"Halloo!" exclaimed Uncle Tim, with a smile; "*what* did you call me?"

"I called you Mr. Taber, I believe," replied Paul, smiling too.

"Well, I declare," exclaimed the old man, "I didn't think you would be guilty of calling me *hard* names in my own shop. Don't you know that my name is *Uncle Tim?*"

"I beg pardon then," said Paul, laughing; "but really I somehow got the impression that your last name was Taber."

"Well, that *was* my name before I changed it. But what was you saying about being turned out of doors?"

"Oh, nothing, only my father's creditors have seized everything, and I'm about as poor as it is comfortable for me to be. One of the creditors was so generous as to offer me a *whole* dollar; but I didn't take it. I just took the things given me by father, which they did not have the face to meddle with. I've got about five dollars too."

"Rich enough to commence life," exclaimed Uncle Tim. "But what do you intend to do?"

"I'm going from the scenes of my disgraceful conduct; but I couldn't go, and feel right, until I saw you. Somehow you seem different from

other people upon whom I have played my mean tricks; and so I have only come to beg pardon, though I don't deserve it, for—"

"Calling me *Mr.* Taber," broke in Uncle Tim. "Well that was a rather hard name; but don't mention it again, and I will grant you free and full forgiveness."

"You misunderstand me, Mr.—I mean Uncle Timothy. I mean that I've been a dreadful bad boy, and I want you to forgive me this once, and—"

"Well, I never!" broke in Uncle Tim,—"I never in all my life! You actually think that I was never a boy myself. Well, it does beat all how much little boys know. Why, I remember when I was not half as old as you are."

"But then, Uncle Timothy, you were a good boy."

"What a dreadful long memory you have got!" and the old man laughed louder than ever. "Actually remember when I was a boy. Let me see; you must be hard on to seventy;" and Uncle Tim fairly roared.

"But wasn't you a very, very good boy, Uncle Timothy?"

"Lord bless you, my child! I was one of the wildest chaps in all the village when I was at your age; and, mark my word, when you get to be as near sixty as I am, boys will think of you just as you do of me."

"Well, Uncle Timothy, I guess for once you'll get wofully deceived in your calculations. But are you in earnest? Were you a bad boy like me?"

"Bad boy like you!" exclaimed the old man. "What will the boy say next? I would really like to know what there is about *you* so shockingly bad. We are none of us any too good; but you just drop that kind of talk instantly, and furthermore, don't let me hear of your leaving Masonville. Why, the very place was named after your ancestors, and, besides, you are a mere child in some things yet. What could you do among strangers?"

"Reform, and make a respectable man," said Paul, rather proudly.

"That's the right spirit," said Uncle Tim; "but why not win the good name here? Just make your home with me, if you are not afraid to work for a living, and each of us will help the other. Why, I want just such a good-hearted, smart boy as you are. What are you crying about?"

"But, Uncle Timothy, you don't really mean what you say, — do you?"

"Mean what I say! Why, I'm mean enough for anything of that kind;" and Uncle Tim began to laugh again.

"But I would only bring disgrace and disappointment to you, Uncle Timothy; and I can't bear to do that."

"Well, it does beat all! Why, I tell you we are

going to be the best boys in town. I have set my heart on that. It makes me young again, to think of having you round the house. Now don't say another word; but just let me slip on my hat and coat, and we will get all your things into the room upstairs, and we'll set up house-keeping in no time. Any good, smart boy can earn his living with me, in a few days. What house-keepers we'll make! No backing out now. So come along, and we'll have your things over here in a jiffy."

CHAPTER II.

KEEPING BACHELOR'S HALL.

THAT evening Uncle Tim celebrated the arrival of Paul by kindling a fire in the back-room, and making a hasty-pudding.

Paul seated himself in the easy-chair, and amused himself by watching the mysteries of the culinary art, as displayed by his benefactor.

"Probably you do not understand the science of cooking a hasty-pudding," said Uncle Tim. "You see I just boil the water, put in a lump of salt about that size for the quantity I'm going to make, then sprinkle in the meal slowly, and keep the spoon busy, so that no lumps are formed; and when the spoon will stand upright in the concern, it is all done except a little more cooking."

"The eating I understand to perfection, Uncle Timothy."

"Glad to hear it! Glad of it! Precious little plum cake and roast beef we have here."

"Grand hasty pudding!" exclaimed Paul, as he began eating. "Wonder if I couldn't learn to make it?"

After the pudding was disposed of, they gath-

ered round the fire, and talked of their affairs, interspersed with the eating of their apples, and some very amusing stories from Uncle Tim; and Paul thought he had never spent a happier evening.

"I declare!" broke in Uncle Tim; "eleven o'clock, and my regular bedtime is half-past nine. Clock must be wrong. Thought it was not far from nine. I must be up in season to-morrow, for I have a pair of shoes to finish for Mrs. Jones."

Here Uncle Tim took down a large, old-fashioned Bible, and read the parable of the prodigal son. "You see," continued the old man, with a pleasant glance at Paul, "I like to read about that affair, for I was once a prodigal myself, and sometimes I get kind o' prodigal now. This is just the way God deals with us. We think we can get along without him, and so we live on sinful husks, that are not fit for anything but hogs to eat, and hardly fit for them. But, by and by, we find that it is not good food to live upon, and we would like to go to our heavenly Father, and take even the lowest place in his kingdom; but we imagine that he is angry with us, and so we stay away; but in reality he has been loving us all the time. Nobody knows how good he is to us!" Here a feeling prayer was offered at the throne of grace, and they retired to bed.

But that night Paul lay awake a long time, thinking of the scenes of the day. "If all Christians were like Uncle Timothy," thought he, "how

pleasant religion would appear! He isn't afraid of being defiled by sinners. He says that God hates sin, but loves sinners, and that Jesus came not to call the good, but sinners. I wonder if that's so? I guess 'tis, for he's a real Christian. I felt kind o' frightened when he took down the Bible; but, mercy sakes alive! how easy he made me feel all the time! He didn't seem much older than I when he was talking on religion. Let me see, what is that passage? 'Let the children come to me, for they are in the kingdom of heaven.' Well, that is the meaning, if it isn't the words, and he's one of the children, and no mistake. How happy he always seems to be! I guess his kind of religion aint very hard for any of us. How awful bad he'll feel, when he comes to know that I never read the New Testament through! I haven't taken much comfort so far, and if I should be a good boy, and not take much then, it wouldn't be any loss. I'll try, — see if I don't. What makes Uncle Tim always so cheerful? Not riches; for this whole house and lot are not worth more than five hundred dollars, and yet he lives comfortably, and gives some away, I am told. But he can't have any luxuries, for he can't certainly earn much; yet he takes more comfort, and enjoys more real happiness, than any man in Masonville. It must be that it's all owing to his religion, and it's his kind of religion too. Now, old Solomon Smith don't take comfort at all, and he's

the richest man in all the village. But Mr. Smith belongs to Uncle Tim's church. Well, I don't care, — he aint got the same kind of religion though. But I'll take Uncle Tim's kind. I'll try to be a good boy, and" — and here he dropped to sleep.

CHAPTER III.

PAUL'S ADVENTURE AT THE CARPENTER'S SHOP.

THE next morning when Paul awoke, the sun had been up some time, while Uncle Tim was busily at work in the front shop on Mrs. Jones's shoes.

As Paul entered the shop, he felt somewhat ashamed of lying abed so late, while his benefactor was at work; but he was soon set at rest by Uncle Tim, who exclaimed, "Good-morning, my boy! you couldn't sleep very well in a strange house I thought; so I slipped out, without noise, to let you have your nap out. It is about breakfast time, and I guess we'll see what we can do in that line."

Uncle Tim went into the small wood-house attached to the back of the house, and split up a few fine kindlings, and, whittling some shavings, soon had the breakfast on the table, which consisted of fried hasty-pudding and molasses, and bread and butter. "Not regular hotel fare," said Uncle Tim; "but better than many poor fellows have, and better for me than roast beef; for I'm used to plain fare."

"I like it first-rate," said Paul. "And now, Uncle Timothy, I've been watching you all the morning, and I think I can help a little. I want to take your hatchet, and cut up a whole barrel of kindlings, and then I'll take the basket, and go to the carpenter's and get a lot of shavings, by going a few times; and then, pretty soon, I shall learn to cook, and work on your shoes, and I don't know what I can't do by and by."

"Didn't I tell you that we should get on famously?" exclaimed Uncle Tim. "I generally have these things ready; but I've been very busy for a few weeks, and shall be for a few weeks more, for I always strike when the iron is hot. You have arrived at the right time to help most. Now all we have to do is to be good boys, and we shall certainly prosper, in being happy at least. Did you ever think how much better off people would be if they were only good? I earn about two hundred dollars a year; but if I should spend one dollar and a half each week in smoking and drinking, I should only have one hundred and twenty-two left; and then what a grand time I could have grumbling at my hard lot! But I should really have nothing left; for drinking would unfit me for labor a part of the time; sickness would be the next thing, and the poor-house would be the inevitable result."

"But," exclaimed Paul, "you don't really mean to say that you live on two hundred a year, do you?

Why, my father said it cost him more than a thousand."

"I think my living is not exactly, in all respects, like his;" and Uncle Tim looked around the room, and cast a comical glance at the table.

Paul commenced work on his barrel of kindlings, and would soon have completed the task, but his benefactor cautioned him against working too hard at first, lest he might render himself unfit for anything on the morrow.

"You are not used to work," said the old man; "and you must commence lightly, and increase as you find you can stand it."

When Paul finished his kindlings, he took the broom, and after some awkward movements finally succeeded in sweeping the whole house.

In the afternoon Paul concluded to fill a barrel with shavings; so, taking a half-bushel basket, he started for the carpenter's shop. He returned in about an hour with his basket full. Uncle Tim gave Paul a rather more searching glance than he meant to as he entered; but exclaimed in his usual good-natured manner, "Well, how did you find Mr. Wilson?"

"About as usual," replied Paul. "Don't you think him a *good* man?"

"Very good! very good! I wish there were more like him. But what makes you ask the question?"

"Why," replied Paul, "as I went into the shop

the chore-boy told me to clear out. I told him I wanted some shavings; but he threatened to kick me out, if I didn't quit the room. I felt like having a fight for an instant; but then I thought how I had made up my mind to be good, and I turned to leave, when Mr. Marshall asked me what I wanted shavings for. I felt mad, and told him I wanted them to kindle fires, to be sure. At that he called me a good-for-nothing street beggar, and told me I should be in jail if I didn't behave better. You see I made up my mind, before I came here, that I would try to govern my temper, and if I couldn't, I would go out somewhere alone, and think the matter over. So, feeling dreadful angry, I went right out of the shop to think what I should do. I hadn't been out more than a minute, before I thought I would go directly back and give them a piece of my mind; but then I thought of you, and stopped. I thought how bad you would feel if I should, and so I concluded it must be wrong to do so. Then I thought perhaps Mr. Marshall called me back to take my part, and I knew that I had been very saucy to him. Then, thinks I to myself, the chore-boy probably believes I'm the same old scapegrace; and I began to think so too. Now, thinks I, what's best to be done? After reflecting a little while, I concluded to wait round till I should see Mr. Wilson; and pretty soon I saw him coming, and asked him if I could have some shavings. 'Shavings!' said he; 'of course you can.

And now, my son,' he continued, 'what do you want them for? 'For Uncle Timothy Taber,' I replied, feeling just as though I should cry. He then asked me if I was stopping with you; and I told him I was. Then he put his hand on my shoulder kind o' softly, and talked with me till I did actually cry. I told him all about my affairs, and he gave me some good advice, and called me a good boy, though I don't know why he should. Then we went into the shop together, and, after he had pointed out the best shavings, he said that 'he allowed none but good boys around his works, for fear they might steal; but of boys who were trying to be good, he wanted a whole shop full.' Then he gave me this red apple; but I felt so queerly I forgot to thank him."

"Well done! well done!" exclaimed Uncle Tim, drawing his sleeve across his eyes. "You are a brave boy, my son. I think we are going to be the best boys in town. Before long I expect I shall have to call you good Paul, or folks won't know who I mean."

"I'm afraid not, Uncle Timothy; but I'll try to do right. I certainly will, and I think I should be very happy if I were only good."

"Nobody can ever be very *un*happy," said the old man, "who is truly good, and especially if he has faith in our heavenly Father. All real unhappiness comes from sin and want of faith. It is worse than infidelity to feel that

we cannot trust our heavenly Father. All goodness consists in loving, while sin consists in hating. That is what I tell my Sabbath-school class."

"I know," said Paul, "that when I got angry to-day I felt very badly, and the madder I grew the worse I felt; but just as soon as I began to feel right toward Mr. Wilson, I began to be happy again."

After a little more conversation, Paul took the basket for more shavings. He walked along slowly, with his head down, as though in deep thought; but when he arrived at the carpenter's shop, he raised his head, put on a determined look, gave the basket a blow by way of emphasis, and exclaimed, "I'll do it; see if I don't!"

As he entered the shop, he passed directly to the work-bench of the man who called him a street beggar, and began in a low voice, "Mr. Marshall, I am very sorry I spoke so saucy to you, and—"

"Halloo!" exclaimed Marshall; "what does all this mean? Are you playing possum, or are you really in earnest?"

"I am certainly very sorry, and—"

"Well, well, so am I," exclaimed Marshall. "The fact is, I'm dreadful quick-tempered; but then I get over it quicker than four winks. I guess, however, it would be better for us to get over being mad before we get angry." Here Mar-

shall, who rather prided himself upon his wit, laughed with a good deal of satisfaction.

"You see," said Paul, "I'm living with Uncle Timothy Taber, and—"

"Living with Uncle Tim!" broke in Marshall. —"best man in the world! In fact, I sometimes think he's even better than I am." Here Marshall laughed again, as though it did him a great deal of good. "By the way," he continued, "I always thought a great deal of you." [This was true; for he was continually warning his own boy to keep out of Paul's company.] "Yes, I always thought you were an uncommonly good-hearted boy." [Not so true.] "Here, chore-boy, you rascal, where are you? Jim, if I ever catch you refusing to let my little friend here have shavings, I'll take your plaguy little head clean from your shoulders."

"No, you won't," said Paul, laughing; "for Jim and I will club together, and halloo for help."

"Well, after all, I guess I won't perform that painful operation; but I'll practise a little surgery upon your ears though." Here Marshall gave vent to another laugh of an exceeding satisfactory character.

As Paul started off with his basket, he thought he had never been so happy in all his life, and he thought of the happiness it would give Uncle Tim to hear of what he had done.

"Well, my son, what news this time?" ex-

claimed Uncle Tim, as Paul entered his new home. "Your face resembles the east side of the house on a clear morning. Been doing something good, I guess. About time I began to call you good Paul. Have to, pretty soon, any way."

"Oh, no, Uncle Timothy! I haven't been doing any good at all."

"What makes your face shine so, then? Some good news?"

"I've found another good man."

"Well, well! I declare, that is a great discovery," broke in the old gentleman. "There are none too many in this world, though I often suspect that many, who appear bad, are rather better than we think. Yes, my son, don't forget that we are altogether too apt to judge more harshly than we ought. But who is this good man?"

"Mr. Marshall."

"The very man who called you hard names."

"Yes; but I was very saucy to him, which caused him to say what he did."

"That is generally the case, my son. I once knew a man who always seemed to think his neighbors were trying to rob him, and the first thing we knew, he was himself imprisoned for stealing. But how did you find out Marshall's good qualities?"

"I told him I was very sorry for being so saucy, and —"

"Can't put it off any longer," broke in Uncle

Tim, giving his knee a violent slap to strengthen the declaration, — "can't put it off any longer. *Good Paul* is the only name fitted for such a boy. It does beat all. I thought you just told me you had been doing nothing good."

"Well, I hadn't," replied Paul. "I only left off being bad."

"Can't stand it," exclaimed Uncle Tim. "I beg your pardon, *Good Paul;* but I must differ with you."

CHAPTER IV.

UNCLE TIM AND PAUL STUDY THEIR LESSON TOGETHER.

THE next day being Saturday, Uncle Tim worked till noon, then put everything to rights, as he called it, and about the middle of the afternoon the old man and Paul took a stroll of about two miles into the rural districts, and returned about dusk in fine spirits.

After supper Uncle Tim seated himself before an old-fashioned bookcase, and selected a few books of various sizes.

"I always get my Sabbath-school lesson over night, and review it in the morning," said the old man, turning to Paul.

"I thought you were a teacher."

"I perform some of the duties of a teacher," said Uncle Tim. "I have nearly twenty boys, of about your age, in my class. Did you imagine that teachers often neglect to study the Sabbath-school lesson?"

"I don't know exactly what I did think," replied Paul. "I didn't know but you had read the

Bible so much, that you could teach anybody but the minister."

Uncle Tim smiled, and instantly became absorbed in thought. He was thinking of the new minister. His revery lasted for some time, when, bringing his hand suddenly down upon his knee, he exclaimed with a satisfied tone, "That's it. He will make just the man for us, if we really mean that he shall be."

Paul looked up inquiringly.

"You see," said the old man, noticing Paul's expression of countenance, "you see that we have a new minister, who arrived a few days ago. He has many excellent qualities, — yes, a great many excellent qualities, — and all it wants is for us to bring them out. He is almost a boy, especially in looks; but he has a good heart. We can spoil him, or not, just as we choose; for he is only one, while we are many; and if he turns out poorly, I can never, I think, blame him. But, of course, we shall all like him."

"What is his name?" asked Paul.

"Charles White. You know that our old pastor, Brother Goodwin, died last spring. Sometimes I think we can never fill his place. We loved him greatly; but then Brother White is all right at heart, and in time we shall all love him as we did our departed pastor."

"How old is he?" asked Paul.

"About twenty-two."

"How in the world could he have learned so much when he's so young?"

Uncle Tim smiled, and merely remarked that some boys learn faster than others.

An idea struck Paul, and he asked the old gentleman how long he had studied the Bible.

"About forty years," replied Uncle Tim.

"Forty years!" exclaimed Paul. "Then you must know all about it."

"Oh, no!" replied the old man. "It takes about forty years to find out how little we know about the blessed book. It is a boundless ocean of truth."

"Does the new minister know as much about the Bible as you do?"

"I am not a good judge of the subject," replied Uncle Tim; "but I will venture to say that we shall have no occasion to find fault with him on that question. He has made the Bible his study, and his heart is in the right place."

Paul was somewhat in the fog in regard to the new minister, and began a train of thought upon the subject, while Uncle Tim buried himself in his Sabbath-school lesson. It was some fifteen minutes after, that the old man looked up and noticed the expression of Paul's countenance, when he remarked, "I do not suppose that my scholars study as much as their teacher; but he who studies most generally reaps the greater harvest."

"I guess I'm not fit to join your class, — am I?" said Paul, hesitatingly.

"Oh, yes!" replied Uncle Tim; "you are just the boy, if you really wish to."

Paul's face brightened, but as quickly elongated as he said, "But you will have to show me so much, and tell me so many things that I don't know."

"That is just what I am studying my lesson for. I am obliged to tell the boys a great many things every Sabbath. That is the work of the teacher."

"Can't I study the lesson to-night?" asked Paul.

"Yes," replied Uncle Tim, smiling. "How I wish all the scholars would do so! This is the lesson for to-morrow, my son, and any question you have to ask, I will try to answer. Perhaps we should do better to learn the lesson together. I think we shall do finely."

"I'm afraid," said Paul, "that I shall ask a great many questions; but I'll try not to bother you more than I can help."

"Ask too many questions!" exclaimed the old man; "why you can't ask too many. There is scarcely anything I like better than to have my class ask questions, for then I know that they are interested."

It was not until the clock struck ten that the teacher and pupil laid aside their question-books; for, owing to Paul's many queries, Uncle Tim had

become so interested that he was totally unconscious of the flight of time.

The old Christian warrior took down the Bible, and read the first chapter of the first epistle of Timothy, and offered a fervent prayer. He asked God to bless the Sabbath school, the superintendent and teachers, his own class, and all the members of the school, and cause them all to walk in the footsteps of the dear Saviour. He asked God to bless the young pastor, the church, and that all hearts might be prepared to treasure up, and profit by, the truths which they should hear from the sacred desk.

That night Paul lay awake for some time, thinking of Uncle Tim's Christianity, and wondering if his benefactor did not know all that was worth learning about religion.

CHAPTER V.

PAUL GETS THE START OF UNCLE TIM. — JOHNNY COLE.

SUNDAY morning Paul rose early, chuckling to think he had the start of Uncle Tim. He cleared out the stove, and put in the fuel ready to light at a moment's warning. He then set the table, and made everything as nearly ready as possible; but there were as yet no signs of Uncle Tim's appearance. He seated himself in the easy-chair, and took up the question-book; but the teacher was not there to give interest to the lesson, and in ten minutes the reader was in the land of dreams. He dreamed that he and Uncle Tim started for Sabbath school, but were met at the door by the new minister, who presented a pistol to his left ear, and fired, and the ball passed completely through his head. He awoke in considerable terror to find that his head had slipped from the back of the chair, and struck against the mirror, which was shattered in a thousand pieces.

Paul gazed at the fragments in much dismay. "Well," thought he, "the new minister didn't really attempt to kill me, but if Uncle Tim don't,

he's not like other people. What a careless boy I am! This is paying my way with a whew to it! What can I ever do to regain his favor? No use however; I *am* a scapegrace, and there's no kind of use trying to be anything else. But it's too bad. I meant to be a good boy; but Uncle Tim will think I'm so careless, that he can't trust me out of his sight. I've a good mind to clear out and go to sea. I might buy a new looking-glass, or pay for the loss out of my five dollars; but that won't satisfy him. He don't want the money; he wants me to be careful and good."

Here Paul sunk into a chair, and burst into tears, fully convinced that whereas, but a few moments ago, he was the happiest boy in Masonville, he was now the most utterly miserable of all the youths of earth. He had been crying but a minute or two, when, raising his head, he beheld Uncle Tim looking down upon him, with one of his happiest expressions.

"Goodness!" exclaimed the old man; "what is the matter? Which leg have you broken?"

"I didn't mean to," broke in Paul. "I really didn't mean to."

"Didn't mean to break your leg!" exclaimed Uncle Tim. "Of course you didn't; but which one is it?"

"My leg isn't broken. I've broken the looking-glass."

"Well!" said the old man, pretending to give a

long breath of relief, "I really thought something had happened worth crying about. Is that all you have done?"

"Yes," replied Paul; "but I didn't mean to. I dropped asleep in the chair, and my head rolled off, as I was leaning back, and fell against the glass. I mean to be careful, but I'm afraid I'm dreadful careless."

"That was all my fault," exclaimed Uncle Tim. "I ought to have known better than to have hung the mirror so low. I do believe I'm growing less and less considerate as I grow old. I'm sorry I caused you so much unhappiness; but it can't be helped now. We'll pick up the pieces and get breakfast. Be very careful and not get any of the small pieces of glass in your fingers."

Breakfast was soon ready. The old man occasionally looked at his Sabbath-school lesson, as he ate, to refresh his memory in regard to the different phases of the subject to be considered.

"I usually eat with my book beside me on Sunday morning," remarked Uncle Tim. "And, by the way, I forgot to mention last night that I usually lie in bed an hour or more later on the Sabbath, to enable me to perform its duties. It is my hardest day's work."

Paul wondered if his benefactor labored on the Sabbath.

"Yes," continued the old man, "the duties of the Sabbath, though pleasant, are many. Sabbath

school in the morning, then two preaching meetings, then conference in the evening, makes a hard day's work for many of us. But it is exceedingly pleasant labor, and, although we become tired in body, we are inwardly refreshed. In laboring for God and man, we find that rest which the world can neither give nor take away. Jesus even died for us, and it would certainly be a shame for me not to *love* to work for him."

When our two friends entered the vestry, there were some half dozen members of the Sabbath school already there. Paul noticed the cordial shaking of hands between Uncle Tim and William Gray, the young superintendent. As the teachers and scholars came in, the old man had a kind word for each, and it was pleasant to see all, however richly or poorly clad, as they accosted Uncle Tim, bestow upon him a look of genuine love and respect, in spite of the plain, coarse garments he always wore.

Paul noticed a little, neatly dressed chap, as he called him, enter the door just before the time of commencing the session. All eyes were turned towards him in an instant, at which he blushed, took off his hat, and stood hardly knowing which way to turn. The superintendent and Uncle Tim, however, advanced at once, shook him warmly by the hand, and the former conducted him to a seat in the Bible class.

After the opening of the school, the superintend-

ent said that he hoped they would be favored with some remarks from the new pastor. Paul looked at the stranger, and wondered if that small, green-looking young fellow was really the new minister.

"I have often thought," continued the superintendent, "that a short sermon or talk, of from ten to fifteen minutes, at each session of the school, would be of untold benefit; but I never did, and never can, presume to ask our pastor to perform that task every Sabbath, as long as he is obliged to preach two sermons, and lead the conference meeting in the evening. I will not express any opinion of my own, but I will say that perhaps a gain might be made by putting less work upon the minister elsewhere, and adding ten to fifteen minutes' talk to the school."

To the no small surprise of Paul, the inexperienced but good-looking stranger stepped forward, and, after stumbling in speech for a few words, poured forth a stream of interesting and instructive remarks for some quarter of an hour, and finished by saying that, so far as ten or fifteen minutes' talk was concerned, he was simply in the hands of the church and school.

As the speaker took his seat, Uncle Tim nodded to the superintendent, and glanced around the room, as much as to say, "Just the man for us."

There were about one hundred persons present, although the number very seldom rose much over

seventy-five, all told. Paul was exceedingly pleased with the lesson, and he noticed that the old man's class was by far the largest, with the exception of the pastor's Bible class. Uncle Tim illustrated the moral bearings of the lessons by made-up stories, or true narratives from life. Strict attention was paid by every scholar, as though every word missed was so much loss. As the lesson drew to a close, Paul remarked to little Johnny Cole that he had no idea how interesting it was to attend Sabbath school.

"It's Uncle Tim," replied Johnny, "and 'taint anything else."

"Are not the other classes interesting?" asked Paul.

"Well, some," replied Johnny; "but then Uncle Tim is a great deal more than some."

"Do you mean," asked Paul, "that you come because Uncle Tim is teacher?"

"Nothing shorter," replied Johnny. "Just look at that class of gals over there. The teacher spends more than half the time talking to other teachers about her bonnets and dresses. Don't you see them gals is acting like time? S'pose I'd be in such a class as that? Not by a long shot. You see that class of boys. Well, old Solomcolly Smith 'tends to them. You see we call old Solomon Smith, Solomcolly, 'cause he's so solemn. He's dreffuls strict; but, then, he can't keep dogs from barking, nor roosters from crowing, you know."

Paul came very near laughing.

"Don't care!" explained Johnny; "Uncle Tim says boys ought to be good; but they aint perfect, and so folks must take 'em as they are, any way. He says folks can fret themselves half to death; but boys will be boys."

"They *are*, generally speaking," put in Paul.

"That's so," continued Johnny. "So what is the use of old Solomcolly Smith trying to put on airs? He can't catch any fish on dry land. Uncle Tim says, if you want to catch fish, you must fish in the ponds where the fish are. I can't explain all these things, but Uncle Tim can, like a book. He knows what's what just as well as a minister. Just look, now. How would you like to be in that class?"

Paul expressed his unwillingness to change.

"Them's um!" said Johnny. "Old Smith never smiles. I'd bet 'twould break his jaw to laugh. See how stern he looks. You might strike fire on his face, it's so hard-set against rude boys. Smith, you know, is the richest man in the place; but poor, old Uncle Tim gives more money to us than Solomcolly does. He says he's trying hard to make Christians of his class. Guess he tries hard enough, and he'll make some hard Christians, too, if he makes any. But he never made one single convert in all his life."

Paul here affirmed his firm belief that Johnny was correct.

"It takes Uncle Tim to convert the boys," continued Johnny. "Why, all his old class joined the church, and some of 'em are preachers. He's just formed us boys into a new class. He picked us all up out of the street. I 'spect he thinks he's going to convert us all; but he'll have a tough job, I guess."

"I guess not," broke in Uncle Tim, who caught the last remark of Johnny Cole. "It's been very pleasant so far, and I have no fears of the future. If I do my duty, God will not fail to do his part. I'm going to have you all in the church in good time; for I have set my heart upon it. Don't you think, Johnny, that you ought to be a Christian?"

"I suppose I had orter," replied Johnny; "but then it's hard for a little newsboy, like me, to give up all my old habits."

"Now look here, Johnny," said Uncle Tim, smiling; "do you take such a great heap of comfort in doing wrong that you can't give it up? Are you not happier since you joined our school and left off swearing?"

"That's so, every time," replied Johnny.

Paul was a trifle shocked at the language of Johnny, and, nudging him with his elbow, cautioned him in a whisper to use different words in addressing Uncle Tim.

The old man noticed Paul's movements, and said, "Johnny, you know, is a newsboy, and has always been used to rough forms of speech; but his heart

is all right, and he is going to break himself of all these little things."

"I don't mean any hurt," replied Johnny. "I'm going to try to leave it off some time,— am trying every day; but it whistles itself sometimes before I know it."

As Uncle Tim passed out of the door, at the close of the session, he encountered the young pastor, and Paul noticed that the manner of the latter was not so cordial with his benefactor as towards the superintendent.

"I guess he isn't much," thought Paul; "and, if he don't like Uncle Tim, I shall never like him; and, furthermore, anybody who don't like Uncle Tim can't be a Christian, anyhow."

Paul noticed that Solomon Smith's class all left for home before the preaching service, while every member of Uncle Tim's class attended meeting with their teacher.

As Mr. White rose to give out the opening hymn, he cast a look of surprise towards the three back pews occupied by the old gentleman and his scholars; but did not seem to notice it particularly afterwards. The prayer was short, and for some few specific objects. The sermon was written, and gave satisfaction, not only to the older persons, but even to the boys composing Uncle Tim's class.

"His heart is in the work, Brother Gray," remarked Uncle Tim, as the two left the church. "I

think he will make just the man we want; but then he is young, and we must do our duty if we wish for such a result."

"Of course we must," exclaimed Mr. Gray. "But had we not better call upon him this week? You know he commenced boarding with Mrs. Jones yesterday."

"Walk home with him first, and see how the land lies," replied Uncle Tim. "Remember that I voted steadily against him, and—"

"Some one has been kind enough to tell the pastor of it," broke in Mr. Gray. "But he will like you all the better when he truly knows you; and that will not take long, for anybody can see through you as easily as looking through a window-glass. But the person who told him either does not hire a pew, or, if he does, will never pay for it."

"Softly! softly! Brother Gray," said the old man. "Perhaps the sinner has repented before now."

At this moment the minister appeared, and Mr. Gray accompanied him home.

Uncle Tim and Paul attended the afternoon service, and in the evening went to conference meeting, where an unusual degree of interest was manifested. The vestry was well filled. In opening the conference, the young pastor commenced in a hesitating way, but warmed up, and acquitted himself to the satisfaction of all. Mr. Gray, the

superintendent, followed; then Mr. Smith offered a prayer of great length; but when he had finished Uncle Tim spoke nearly ten minutes in a strain of blunt eloquence and deep religious feeling, of which Paul never dreamed him capable.

The pastor listened in surprise to the old Christian warrior, and, before the speaker had finished, tears wet the young minister's cheeks more than once. As the old man closed, the pastor rose to his feet. His awkwardness was all gone. There was no hesitancy, as he commenced with the words of Jacob, —

"'Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not.' My friends, the darkness of doubt has disappeared. A thousand times I have asked myself the question whether I had done wisely in accepting the invitation to become the shepherd of this people; but I feel that my lines are fallen in pleasant places. I have a goodly heritage. I cannot be mistaken. I know, I realize, that this church is founded upon the rock Christ Jesus, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

As this last sentence was uttered, a lady from the rival church quickly rose to her feet, turned short round, and strode angrily from the room. The interruption was, however, seemingly unnoticed by the speaker, who continued his remarks in a strain of simple, but powerful eloquence, that took the whole audience by surprise; but, most of all, the pastor himself, who had, until that evening,

but a faint idea even of his own power in the conference room. When he finished, there were tears of joy in the eyes of many of the congregation at the thought of the prize they had drawn in the lottery of pastoral candidates. Even Solomon Smith was visibly affected, while Uncle Tim gave utterance to a hearty Amen! which seemed to do him great good, and afforded him considerable relief.

"You have conquered him," whispered Mr. Gray to Uncle Tim, as the meeting closed.

"Conquered him!" said Uncle Tim. "I tell you, Brother Gray, that Almighty God made a conquest of that young brother's heart before he ever caught sight of Masonville. His heart is the abode of the Divine Spirit."

As the youthful preacher came to the spot where Uncle Tim and the superintendent were conversing, he grasped the old man by the hand, and spoke with peculiar tenderness.

"Good-night, Brother White," said Mr. Gray; "I will leave you to-night in the hands of Brother Taber, or Uncle Tim as we all call him, and you cannot be in better keeping."

The old man and the minister passed on a few steps without speaking, Paul bringing up the rear.

"We had an excellent conference," said Uncle Tim, breaking the silence. "I never remember one of deeper interest, except it might be during some great religious interest."

"I never enjoyed one so truly before," added

the pastor. "I was not aware of the deep religious feeling of this church. I believe I have made a great mistake during all my religious life. It seems to me that I have but just really opened my eyes and heart to the light of the glorious gospel. I feel to-night as though I could easily convert thousands every year."

"And were we all imbued with the right spirit," broke in the old Christian hero, "thousands might be converted as easily as we now convert the tens."

"I see it! I see it!" exclaimed the pastor. "We are not in earnest; or, if our hearts are right, we smother our best thoughts, and stifle our most holy and powerful sentiments."

"Nothing can be truer," replied Uncle Tim.

"I have been thinking seriously upon this subject, of late," continued the pastor, with deep feeling; "and I realize to-night that we greatly wrong both ourselves and our brother man by closing the doors of our hearts, lest we be thought too religious, or, perhaps, fanatical."

"I believe you have uttered a great truth," exclaimed the old man. "I practised that sin for years, but I trust it is now discarded from my heart."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the young preacher. "Why, I thought, as you were speaking to-night, that you were always in the spirit, just as you then appeared."

"Brother White," said the old man, in a tone of deep feeling, "I worked for years in the church and school with good intentions; I was even looked up to as a pattern for believers; but it was not until after twenty years' religious experience that I was, as I trust, truly converted."

"I think I fully understand you," replied the pastor; "and I fondly hope that I can date my real conversion from to-night."

"God grant it! God grant it!" exclaimed the old man, grasping the pastor's hand. "Pardon my plainness of speech; but I thought as much. Scores of church-members in almost every village live and die in the Christian *belief;* but never fully uncover the gospel already in the heart, so that its light shall go out to warm and gladden other hearts. I call it the chief obstacle to great success in the church."

"I believe you, I believe you," said the pastor. "But I am young, and have much to learn. I trust you will not refuse to warn and admonish when I am wrong, and point out the true path of Christian duty."

"I hardly think," replied the old man, smiling, "that I shall feel called upon to admonish; but I will endeavor to strengthen your hands, as you labor prayerfully and faithfully for the gospel of Jesus."

"God bless you!" said the pastor, warmly.

"There is one truth," continued the old man,

"that I would were impressed upon the mind and heart of every preacher of the gospel. No really Christian minister, even of ordinary talents, among a half decent people, can help succeeding in his labors, if he but opens his soul and lets out the streams of gospel light which it contains; provided he keeps clear of the bickerings of the parish, and constantly guards his heart and tongue from spite and hatred."

"I pray God keep me in that path!" said the young pastor.

"I trust he will," added Uncle Tim. "Let me also add, for your encouragement, that every Christian community loves the deeply religious minister, while, in a worldly congregation, every nine persons in ten prefer such a preacher, although they may not confess it. Furthermore, none but such a pastor can ever command the respect of all."

It was after midnight when the young preacher quitted Uncle Tim's house, and turned his footsteps towards his boarding-house.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NEW MINISTER IN TROUBLE.

THE next morning Paul heard a familiar voice in the street crying "New York Herald," "Tribune," "Boston Journal," "Traveller;" and, opening the door, he saw Johnny Cole passing the shop.

"Halloo, Paul!" cried Johnny. "How'd you like Sabbath school yesterday?"

"Tip-top," replied Paul.

"Uncle Tim's a grand old fellar, aint he?"

"Johnny," said Paul, "I wouldn't use that word about Uncle Tim, if I were you."

"Whew!" exclaimed Johnny. "I don't mean no hurt. I mean he's grand, first-rate. What are you doing here? Don't live with Uncle Tim, do ye?"

Paul replied in the affirmative.

"Don't say! How'd you do it? Have to tease hard?"

"Oh, no," replied Paul; "he invited me."

"Did he though? That's bully."

Paul did not like the last word, but said nothing.

"Saw you in conference meeting, last night," continued Johnny. "Me and Bill Jones went together. How'd you like the new minister?—Smart chap, aint he?"

"I liked him very much," replied Paul.

"He's some," exclaimed Johnny. "Didn't he rip into it the last time he spoke? Golly! he's the boy for me. You know Lucy Smith, old Solomcolly Smith's gal."

"Yes," replied Paul. "She teaches the infant class, I believe."

"Yes," broke in Johnny; "and she's going to take her class in the gallery upstairs, and I'll bet she'll make things hum. She's some, she is! Not a bit like her father. He's so much gooder than everybody else that you can't touch him with a ten-foot pole. Spose I'd be in his class? No *sir*, — not two minutes by the watch."

Charles White, the new pastor, grew more and more popular as the weeks of autumn and winter passed. The congregation increased to the utmost capacity of the house, the conference meetings were crowded, while the school rapidly increased in numbers.

Life has great attractions, while death is always shunned by the multitudes. Life was infused into every department of the society, and, as a natural result, the multitude came to all the religious gatherings.

Despised and hated bigotry may be manifested,

repulsive religious dogmas may be promulgated by any sect; but so long as life is one of the great characteristics of that religious body, the people will never cease to throng their temples, any more than water will stop flowing towards the ceaseless rolling ocean. Life then is necessarily one of the great requisites of success in any church. Take the life from the Methodist denomination, and how long would it remain the greatest Protestant sect of this country? Ay, how long could it even exist? John Wesley was a *live* man; as a natural consequence he founded a *live* denomination, and the *live* Methodist of to-day sways a greater multitude than any other Protestant sect of this country.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the religious body over which Charles White was settled as pastor was looked upon as a success under the *live* administrations of the young shepherd. But the boy preacher was far from being successful in a financial point of view. When he settled in Masonville, he owed about one hundred dollars, which sum he proposed to pay little by little, by savings from his salary. His salary, however, was only four hundred dollars per year, and, as he paid four dollars per week for board, he had simply one hundred and ninety-two dollars left for all other purposes. The parish had once paid more; but when, a few months before the opening of our story, another society was organized in Mason-

ville, money was not so easily raised; in fact, Mr. White had been called partly on account of his being able, as a single man, to live on four hundred a year. During the winter's revival, however, forgetting self in the cause of his Master, the young pastor had been liberal in the outlay of books, stationery, etc., to make himself more useful to the church, and when spring came he had nothing to pay even the interest on his note.

It has been often truly remarked that "when poverty comes in at the door, love flies rapidly from the first window;" and when the young preacher found that not only he could not pay his interest money, but his board had not been settled for nearly a month, he opened his eyes in a broad stare of surprise and perplexity. The next Sabbath his people were compelled to listen to two poor sermons, while in the school and conference he was decidedly dull.

By-the-by, if the reader is occasionally obliged to submit to a series of listless sermons, it might be productive of immense good to view the matter, first of all, financially. Great religious discoveries might often be made by such researches.

Uncle Tim noticed the change that came over the spirit of the pastor's dream, and the next evening, at the old man's earnest solicitation, the minister was prevailed upon to spend the evening at Uncle Tim's house.

Mr. White's whole manner seemed changed.

True he talked upon church and school affairs; but it was evident that his present thoughts were rambling in some other field. It was in vain that the old Christian hero spoke glowingly of the gospel of Christ; in vain that he dwelt upon the interests of the church and school; his pastor's mind was upon finance.

"Brother Taber," said the young preacher, awakening from a kind of revery upon board and interest,—"Brother Taber, it is vain for me to attempt talking heartily of religion to-night. My wordly affairs engross almost my whole attention, and, until I can drive these thoughts from my head, you will be obliged to listen to even poorer preaching than I am wont to inflict upon my congregation."

"Can I assist you in any way?" asked the old man.

A sudden thought struck Mr. White. "If I inform Uncle Tim," thought he, "it will afford me some relief at least; and, although he cannot supply me with the twenty-five dollars which I need, he can offer advice as well as consolation. I think I can work, and preach better, if some friend knows of the true condition of my finances." The pastor did not dare stop to consider the matter even a whole minute; but, as these ideas flashed through his brain, he unburdened himself to Uncle Tim without reserve.

"Brother White," said the old man, "I knew

there was something wrong with you, and I thank God it is no worse. I was really afraid something might mar your success in our society. Now I can easily spare you from fifty to one hundred dollars, and —"

But we will close this chapter by remarking that when the pastor left he had in his possession a check for twenty-five dollars.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SEWING-CIRCLE.

THE next Thursday the sewing-circle met at the residence of Mrs. Gray. The ladies met in the afternoon; but during the evening the gentlemen came in, and even the boys and girls were present.

Johnny Cole took a seat beside Paul, and, without the least reserve, expressed his inmost feelings concerning the church and school. Johnny evidently considered himself an important personage in the society. He seemed to feel that the pastor especially needed his individual moral support as well as the cent which he regularly put in the contribution-box every time it was passed either to his class or the pew in which he sat. Johnny was a constant attendant at school and church, and, as a natural result, he was interested in their welfare. He laid up his treasures of time and pennies in the two organizations, and where his treasures were being regularly deposited, there was his heart also. It was not surprising, therefore, that the little newsboy often spoke of the church and school; for

"out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

"Aint it grand," said Johnny to Paul, "to 'tend sewing-circles? It kind o' polishes a fellow like shining up a pair of boots. It's a grand thing for a boy to keep good company. It kind o' takes the slang out of a fellow. I'm rough; but then I aint quarter so *slangy* as I used to was. I guess it's about time we had something for the young folks."

"It's pretty early yet," remarked Paul.

"Well 'tis, I guess," continued Johnny. "All the young folks aint come yet. There comes *our* minister. Looks bright as a new bonnet. Guess he didn't feel well last Sunday. Thought he didn't discourse like he generally does. But never mind; he'll give us a good one next Sunday, or if he shouldn't happen to then, he'll do it next time. Depend upon it, Paul [here Johnny nodded his head very decidedly], he'll wake up before long. He aint dead yet, but only a little sleepy. Look at Solomcolly Smith. He's 'fraid we rude boys will make too much noise. He needn't feel scart before he's hurt. Who's going to make any noise, I'd like to know?"

Paul here expressed himself very decidedly of the opinion that no unnecessary noise or rudeness would be indulged in by any of the young folks.

"Of course not," continued Johnny. "See Uncle Tim playing with them little gals. I should think he'd get tired of it. They can't let *our* teach-

er alone. See that little gal sitting right on his shoulder. There's another climbing up on the back of his chair, one on each knee, and a lot more all around him. I guess he's in for a frolic this time. There's Lucy Smith looking at *our* minister. She don't like him; but I don't see why; and sometimes I've thought he didn't think over and above of her. Kind o' strange when they're such tip-top folks. He's speaking to her now, and she don't hardly look up at him. Don't see what they've got ag'in each other. When he's away she'll bust right into a giggle at anything funny; but when he's round, she's almost as sober as her father. Do you really think they are mad with each other?"

Paul ventured an opinion that they were not actually angry with each other; for they never showed the least spite; "but," continued he, "they simply don't seem to hitch horses very well."

"He's looking at her now," said Johnny. "Golly! how red her face is, now she sees him! Guess she don't like it. Perhaps that's the trouble; for I've seen him kind o' look hard at her a good many times before. They act kind o' queer; but there's one thing certain, they don't seem to fancy each other. Tip-top though, both on 'em."

Johnny and Paul continued their conversation till supper-time, which was partaken of while standing around a table. After supper the dining-

room was cleared for the children, who soon began to be merry.

Mr. Solomon Smith was a widower, and the richest man in Masonville. His daughter Lucy, already mentioned as the teacher of the infant class, officiated as his house-keeper, although not yet twenty years of age. It was whispered, and sometimes quite audibly, that the father would long ago have joined the new church, but for the efforts of the daughter, whom the father almost idolized. Lucy was a great favorite with the church and school; both of which looked leniently upon the father's failings, in consideration of the daughter's many excellent qualities.

As the circle broke up, the young pastor made his way to the side of Lucy Smith, with the intention of doing something desperate; but, as she looked up, he merely stammered out that the people seemed to be departing.

Lucy agreed with him.

Mr. White gave a slight cough, and buttoned his great-coat, and then partially unbuttoned it, while Lucy was vainly trying to get on her waterproof cloak. It was a grand opportunity, and Mr. White offered his assistance; but, as he pulled up the hood, Lucy wondered what could be the matter.

"I don't think his nervous system is in perfect order," thought she. "Last Sabbath I could see that something had happened, and to-night his

hands are far from being steady. I feel alarmed. I think I will inquire after his health. Brother White, are you enjoying good health?"

The pastor replied in the affirmative.

"I think you have labored too hard," said Lucy, "since you came among us. Do be careful of your health, Brother White, and you will be the means of great good in our midst. We have prospered so greatly under your labors, that anything connected with your interests ought to concern us. You are paler and thinner than when you commenced your work in Masonville, and, if you do not curtail some of your efforts, you will most assuredly break down."

The young pastor promised to be exceedingly careful of his health in the future.

During this conversation, the two emerged into the street, where the pastor offered his arm, and they proceeded to Mr. Smith's residence. Conversation lagged. Neither felt like talking; in fact, both felt slightly embarrassed. As they parted at the door, the young pastor was cordially invited to call often. Mr. White thanked Lucy, and concluded he would do so.

That night the young pastor dreamed he was keeping house, and that Lucy Smith made an excellent house-keeper.

From that time some people noticed that Mr. White often made pastoral calls at the residence of Mr. Solomon Smith.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PASTOR ATTEMPTS TO TAKE A WIFE.

"WHAT a treasure in an earthen vessel is the soul of our aged brother, Uncle Timothy!" exclaimed the pastor, as he accompanied Lucy Smith home from a conference meeting a few weeks after the events recorded in the last chapter. "Truly God has greatly blessed this people in such a friend."

"He *has* blessed us," replied Lucy. "By the way, Brother White, do you know that Uncle Timothy and myself voted against you? He thought you were too young, on account of the split in the church; and I always vote with him."

"God has greatly blessed my poor self," said the pastor; "for I could never have succeeded among this people without his help. I was not aware how *you* voted; but I trust I might count upon your vote hereafter, in an emergency."

"You smile very confidently," replied Lucy, laughing; "but I should have to vote simply as Uncle Timothy did."

"As he once did?" asked the pastor, with a still broader smile.

"I shall have to refer you to our aged brother," replied Lucy. "He voted against you, yet proved himself your best friend."

"He has been a father to me!" exclaimed the pastor, warmly. "How can I ever repay his kindness?"

"By confiding in him always," replied Lucy. "But I trust you always do."

"I do, with the exception of one very important matter," replied the pastor.

"That secret does not concern this parish, I hope."

"But it does, or at least I hope it will."

"Then confide in Uncle Timothy at once," said Lucy.

"Are *you* willing?"

"How can you ask such a question? Promise me," continued Lucy, "that you will tell him all, and ask his advice."

"I promise," replied the pastor; "but may I not confide in you first?"

"But why confide in me at all?"

"Because I fondly hope that you are of all others most interested."

"I! What *can* you mean?"

"Miss Smith," said the young pastor, "I have seen much of you since I came to Masonville, and my esteem has increased with each day's acquaintance. By and by, if I should wait long and patiently, and prove myself worthy of you, would

you consent to be my companion for life? My parents are both in the spirit-land. Brothers and sisters I never knew. Say that you do not refuse me. At least do not say *no*, and I will try to be as patient as you could wish."

Lucy trembled for a moment; but the next instant, with a gay laugh, exclaimed, "Mr. White, I am really afraid that you are growing altogether too personal. This is the last act I supposed you would be guilty of. I cannot reply to-night; but, as it concerns the parish, first consult Uncle Timothy, and then my father."

We will draw a curtain over the residue of their walk homeward.

The next evening the pastor called on Uncle Timothy, and, after a long conversation, departed with a large flea in his ear.

On Tuesday morning the first man the young preacher met was Mr. Smith. Mr. White gave one look, and, seeing the peculiar expression of his face, he felt like hiding behind some object that would serve to shield him from the stern look of his parishioner. But there was no escape, and putting the best foot forward, and extending his hand, expressed himself happy to meet Brother Smith.

Mr. Smith's countenance expressed anything but cordial friendship. He looked like a man whose confidence had been shamefully abused, and whose

duty it was to administer a severe rebuke to the culprit before him.

"Young man," began the injured individual, "I can hardly conceive of a more base deception than for a person, under the guise of Christianity, to betray the confidence reposed in him."

The guilty pastor was speechless with astonishment.

"It is useless," continued Mr. Smith, "to attempt any palliation of your conduct. You have betrayed the confidence which I, as a member of your flock, have ever reposed in you as my pastor."

"Brother Smith," exclaimed the clerical criminal, firing up under the cutting words, "I demand an instant explanation of your language."

"Young man," said Mr. Smith, in his severest tones, "do you mean to add insult to injury? Is it your deliberate intention, after having betrayed my confidence, to openly defy me to my face?"

An indignant reply rose to the lips of the pastor; but, hearing a familiar step and voice, he turned and beheld the smiling face of Uncle Tim, which seemed the very picture of the heaven within his soul. Truly the kingdom of heaven is within the heart!

"Good-morning! good-morning!" exclaimed Uncle Tim, shaking each by the hand. "Glorious morning! It makes one feel like a new man. It is God's sunshine too. It reminds me of the words of the apostle James: 'Every good gift, and every

perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.' Brother Smith, we are not grateful enough for God's mercies. We ought to feel like the little boy, who, as he jumped out of bed, and looked from the window, exclaimed, 'Why, mother, it is so beautiful that I want to hug the morning. God makes all the bright mornings, don't he, mother? and I think Jesus must be right behind the bright sun, or it wouldn't shine so beautiful.' That's faith, brethren, and the kind of faith we want. Not that cold condition of soul that sees nothing good about us; but that faith that fills our hearts with love for everything and *everybody*."

"He has saved me again," said the pastor to himself. "O God, shall I ever grow into the 'full stature of a man in Christ Jesus,' like this noble Christian?" And speaking aloud, as he grasped the old man's hand, he exclaimed, "Why have you never entered the pulpit?"

"I trust," replied Uncle Tim, in a low voice, "that I did not shrink from Christian duty in deciding, after many prayers, not to enter the ministry. I have thought that, perhaps, in my way, I might do more good as I am."

Mr. Smith looked up in surprise. The idea of Uncle Tim entering the pulpit never before entered his mind. This secret, which the aged Christian

warrior had carried in his bosom so many years, was now revealed.

"But, Brother White," continued Uncle Tim, "if you are not preoccupied, call at my house; for I am busy finishing a pair of shoes, and I would like to converse with you, while at my work, about the prosperity of our church. And, Brother Smith, let us also be favored with your presence, and we will converse upon the subject we have most at heart, — the spread of the glorious gospel."

Mr. Smith excused himself, and Uncle Tim and the pastor passed on together, the latter saying to Mr. Smith, as they separated, "I will see you again for an explanation."

They had proceeded but a few steps, when the old gentleman repeated, in a low voice, "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger."

"God bless you, my father in Israel!" said the pastor. "You have saved me once more. Where should I be without you?"

"Just where you are now," replied Uncle Tim; "just where you are now, — in the hands of God."

. . . . . .

Byron, in speaking of the storm in the Alps, says that "every mountain had found a tongue," and it would seem that every object in Masonville must have been gifted with the power of communication; for, before night, the larger part of the community was in possession of the story of the

young pastor's attempt to take to himself a wife in the person of Lucy Smith, and, when the latter entered the vestry, accompanied by her father, all eyes were directed towards the door. Lucy was only nineteen years of age; but she bore up under the stare with the greatest self-composure.

When the pastor opened the meeting, no one would have guessed that any particular trial had fallen to his share on that day, and some people began seriously to question the flying reports, which could not be traced to any real source.

"They may believe or not, just as they've a mind," said Johnny Cole, to Paul; "but I know what's what as well as anybody."

The meeting proved to be one of unusual spiritual interest, and many hearts were aglow with the spirit of the gospel. To the surprise of many, Lucy Smith rose, and bore testimony to the joys of Christian faith. Under the circumstances, the bare sound of her voice acted like a powerful stimulant upon the young pastor, and when he uttered what he partially intended for the closing exhortation, the pure, simple, but powerful appeal visibly affected the whole congregation, and the responsive amens were hearty and many.

"The usual time of closing these meetings has not yet arrived," added the pastor, "and there is still ample opportunity for further remarks."

As the speaker sat down, a member of Uncle Tim's class arose, and stated his wish to live a

Christian life, and to be known as a professor of religion by the world around.

"It takes *our* teacher to make the converts," said Johnny Cole to himself.

The new convert had hardly ceased speaking when Paul arose and made substantially the same statement.

"It *does* take Uncle Tim and no mistake," added Johnny, to himself, "and when *he* makes a convert, he's made."

As Paul took his seat, Uncle Tim rose, and, in a tone of voice that betrayed his emotion, spoke of the joy it gave him to hear the words of the first converts from his new class. "I feel," he added, "that God has greatly favored me by allowing none but good boys to enter my classes."

In spite of the deep religious feelings awakened by the new converts, there was a perceptible smile upon the faces of many of the congregation as they thought of Uncle Tim's *good* scholars, all of whom he had picked up from the streets, while Paul and Johnny Cole were set down as having been the hardest of known cases in the shape of boys.

But the old man continued: "They were apparently just like all other boys; but I soon discovered, away down in each of their hearts, a rich mine of goodness — a golden vein — undeveloped, but there nevertheless. When we experience the new birth, or meet with what we are pleased to term a change of heart, the greatest change is often to develop

or uncover what before was latent or hidden. My friends, let us, who long ago made profession of faith in Jesus, uncover the latent fire of love for God and the Saviour, which I trust yet dwells in all our hearts; and let that light so shine that others may be led to glorify God. Let us not for one instant become the means of cooling the ardor of these young converts. In seasons of great religious interest we are all zealous. Some people may think us too warm. I have learned, however, not to look for danger in that direction; our perils proceed from a more northern latitude; and therefore, above all, let us see to it that we do not freeze these new converts to death by any lack of zeal or interest on our part."

The old Christian warrior continued for a few minutes more to exhort and encourage those who had just started in the Christian race, and closed with a strong appeal to the church to reap the fields already white with the harvest.

It was an effort worthy of "the old man eloquent," as some were pleased to call Uncle Tim; and, when the meeting closed, it seemed to be the prevailing opinion that quite a number would be added to the church within a brief period.

After the benediction there was a general shaking of hands, and many congratulations were offered the young converts, and Paul was spoken of as the youngest person who had made a public profession of religion in Masonville for a number of years.

"I am not surprised," said Uncle Tim, as he took Paul's hand in his own, "I am not in the least surprised at the noble stand you have taken. I have been looking for this event. And it is precisely what I expected from you, my young brother," he added, as he grasped the hand of the other young convert.

"Just as I thought!" whispered Johnny Cole, as he stood beside Paul. "I'm real glad of it, Paul, and sometime, when I leave off selling papers, and get a little older, perhaps — well, perhaps —"

"There is no perhaps about it," broke in Uncle Tim, with a beaming countenance; "not a single perhaps. It's as sure as sun-rising, Johnny. I've set my heart upon taking all my class into the church, and no years of waiting or for change of occupation. Not a bit of it, Johnny. I'll let you into a secret, Paul," continued the old man, pretending to speak very low, but loud enough for Johnny Cole to hear, — "I'll let you into a secret, and that is, that before long we are going to have a Christian newsboy in Masonville, and he will be a member of this church, and his name will be good little Johnny Cole."

CHAPTER IX.

SOLOMON SMITH.

"Brother Smith," said the pastor, after the close of the conference, "can I speak with you a few moments?"

"Perhaps you are going to talk about me," broke in Lucy. "If so, I may object to being talked about behind my back."

"An excellent rule, my friend," said the pastor; "but then you are aware that the best of rules have occasional exceptions."

"True," replied Lucy; "but the exception does not appear to occur just at this time."

"Well," said the pastor, "I will agree to submit the case to your father, and abide by his decision."

"I think," interposed Mr. Smith, in a persuasive voice, and with the tender expression of countenance that he always wore when speaking of or to his only child, — "I think, Lucy, you had better let us converse alone."

"On one condition, father," said Lucy, looking up into his face; "and that is, that I be allowed to speak with you both after the interview is over."

"Of course! of course!" exclaimed the pastor; "but Brother Smith and myself wish to open the subject alone."

Lucy kissed her father, and walked on a few steps ahead.

"After all," thought the pastor, "there is a warm, yes, very warm spot in Brother Smith's heart. I have often noticed his great love for his child. He ought not to be deprived of her society for any ordinary consideration; but what prevents him from living with us?"

"Brother White," said Mr. Smith, interrupting the pastor's revery, "I am pained at your conduct towards myself."

"I am wholly unaware of anything on my part to cause you pain," replied the pastor. "If, however, I have unknowingly given offence, I will do anything reasonable to convince you of my sincere desire to deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God and man."

"It is useless for you to attempt to deceive me," broke in Mr. Smith, who was waxing warm.

"Far be it from me to attempt such a deception," said the pastor. "But I think I understand the reason for your great solicitude, Brother Smith, and I cannot say, therefore, that I ought to blame you. Your daughter is dear to your heart. She is your all. I know the great affection you have for her, and I shall be the last man, I trust, to take her from you. I ought perhaps to

have learned your feelings first; but knowing, as I think I do, your mind upon this subject, I shall drop the whole matter before it is made worse. I resign all pretensions to your daughter's hand. True, I cannot wed another; but I will remain as I am, wedded simply to the gospel of my dear Redeemer. Brother Smith, let us remain, as we have been, fast friends, and I will endeavor that nothing on my part shall ever cause you to think otherwise than well of your poor pastor."

Mr. Smith looked in astonishment. His pride was touched to see his only child given up without a struggle. "Young man," he exclaimed, "do you think so lightly of my daughter, as to cast her aside so easily? I had supposed that you had some little love for her."

In spite of all his resolutions to avoid a rupture, an indignant sentence was about to leap from the lover's tongue, when the voice of Lucy for a moment partially stilled the troubled storm. "I will venture to say," she exclaimed, "that you have both talked long enough. Come right into the house;" and she grasped the arm of each, and led them into her father's dwelling.

Lucy kept up a continuous stream of talk until they were comfortably seated by the cosey fire in the sitting-room. Lucy passed a dish of nice fruit, and they all commenced eating the delicious apples and pears, though it seemed to the pastor that each mouthful would choke him. Stung almost to

madness by the persistent harshness of Mr. Smith, he tried in vain to calm his troubled spirit. Lucy saw the storm raging within, and dared not, even for an instant, leave the room. She beheld the pale face and trembling frame, and feared for the result. "But," thought she, "this matter must be settled here, or they will meet alone, and an eternal rupture will be the inevitable consequence."

"Now," said Lucy, calming her feelings, and smiling as she turned to her father and lover, "now suppose we open this little matter of ours in a business-like manner. Our friend wishes me to become a pastor's wife; but father is opposed; I, therefore, as a dutiful child, obey my parent, and you, Brother White, are in duty bound to obey me. Should father change his mind, we can renew the subject; until that time, however, we will endeavor to dismiss the topic."

"I have proposed nearly this same plan," said the pastor.

"Then," added Lucy, "there is nothing further to be done, except for father to agree with us."

"But," broke in Mr. Smith, whose wounded pride was yet unhealed, "I really thought, when our minister sought your hand, that he had some little love for you; at least I did not think him capable of throwing you aside like a piece of rubbish."

"Father! father!" exclaimed Lucy, beseechingly, "can you not see the fearful struggle in our

pastor's mind? Do not, I entreat you, do not strike a crushed heart."

"He does not attempt to convince us that he has a heart."

This cutting speech from Mr. Smith was too much for flesh and blood to bear, and the young pastor said, with a terrible calmness, "I will prove it then; for never, while life lasts, will I cease to press my claim."

"Brother White," said Lucy, laying her hand upon his shoulder, "if you would retain my friendship, never utter a word that bears the semblance of disrespect for my father."

"Forgive me," said the pastor; "but I felt as though I were stung. Brother Smith, let us be friends. For the sake of the church, for the good of the gospel we profess, for the love of all that is dear to us, let us not become enemies."

"I will answer for my father," interrupted Lucy. "Why, he could not injure any one. Whatever may happen, you may safely rely upon our friendship."

To the surprise of the pastor, Mr. Smith extended his hand, saying, "We *will* be friends; but you must not, and cannot take away my idol. I am satisfied to let the subject drop at once, not to be alluded to again, and we will meet in future as though no disagreement had ever occurred."

"Amen! God bless you!" exclaimed the young pastor. "Your kindness has totally un-

manned me. May Heaven bless you now and always!"

Mr. Smith, whose wounded pride was healed, left the room, and the pastor took his leave, resolved to conquer his passion as soon as possible; but, alas, how feeble are our strongest resolutions! He passed through the entry, opened the outside door, and was about to step into the street, when Lucy gave his hand a warm pressure, and murmured, "Good-night." Forgetting entirely his late brave resolve, he caught her in his arms.

"How can I give you up!" he exclaimed.

"Be patient, Charles," replied Lucy. "We are very young yet, and can afford to wait. All will be well by and by."

CHAPTER X.

THE GREAT FIRE. — MR. WILSON.

Mr. Smith was, as we have said, the richest man in Masonville. He was in no business, but owned the great cotton-mill and a dozen tenement-houses, all of which he let to a manufacturing company, who had rented the property for a number of years. Mr. Smith's income was large; but, as he owed for about a third of the real estate, he made his debts an excuse for not paying more for the support of the gospel, and therefore the pastor must live upon four hundred dollars a year; for most of the other church-members were poor.

Although Mr. Smith paid little towards the support of the gospel, for some reason, which no one could explain, it was considered desirable to make strenuous efforts to keep him from going over to the opposite church.

But "riches take to themselves wings, and fly away." The pastor had proceeded but a few rods from Mr. Smith's residence, when the startling cry of "Fire!" resounded through the village, and in a few minutes the streets were thronged with people hurrying to the scene of conflagration.

"Where is it?" asked Lucy.

"The large cotton-mill!" shouted Johnny Cole, as he rushed by wild with excitement.

"Father's mill, and not insured!" exclaimed Lucy.

The policy of insurance expired the day before, and Mr. Smith had neglected to have it renewed.

"Father," exclaimed Lucy, "the mill is on fire!"

Mr. Smith rushed wildly from the house, and hurried to the scene of disaster. He saw the lurid flames bursting from the windows, men running hither and thither, trying to do something; yet the flames steadily increased. An engine was soon in operation; but the fire, like some wild behemoth, licked up the water and rushed on towards the unconsumed portions of the immense edifice. All human efforts seemed to avail nothing, and, in a short time, the large wooden structure, with its floors and machinery saturated with oil, was one great body of flame. Attempts were now made to save some valuables from the building; but all in vain. The tenement-houses were kept wet by the engine for a short time; but the terrible heat from the mill scorched the clapboards and shingles, until all at once half a dozen dwellings were on fire. Mr. Smith shouted, and ran from one point to another; but he saw no hope from any quarter, and long before midnight nearly every dollar's worth of his wealth had vanished like the morning dew.

Mr. Smith had, for many years, cheated God by withholding large sums that should have been given to the church; but he was never accused of cheating his fellow-men, and, to the surprise of many who knew his extremely avaricious disposition, he drew from different sources thousands of dollars that might have been kept secreted, and attempted to pay the last dollar, though it might leave him without a penny. His creditors, seeing his manifest integrity, allowed him to keep five thousand dollars, as a token of their esteem for an honest debtor. This totally unlooked-for clemency would have caused the unfortunate man to take cheerfully his great financial disaster, had it not been for the thought of his idol daughter. But something must be done; and, at the earnest solicitation of Lucy, the five thousand dollars were put at interest in the savings bank, a small tenement hired, and, as the daughter often observed, there was still much to be thankful for.

Some thirty to forty families were left homeless, and double that number thrown out of employment. A public meeting was called, the moving spirit of which was Mr. Wilson, already mentioned as the owner of the carpenter's shop, and who, it will be recollected, befriended Paul, as recorded near the introduction of our story. A few hundred dollars in money, provisions, and clothes were collected for immediate use, and employment was found for a part of the sufferers; but when the money was all

expended some twenty families were still dependent upon public charity. It was at this juncture of affairs that Mr. Wilson, who owned a tract of land about a mile from the village, set all the dependent males at work tilling the soil; for spring had just opened. The laborers were to receive half pay, and Mr. Wilson proposed to hire money on mortgage and pay cash every week; thus keeping the families from hunger and cold until some better employment could be obtained for all.

Mr. Wilson had always been noted for his liberality to the poor and unfortunate; but, when people saw the still greater interest he took in the sufferers, his praise was upon every tongue. He spent almost his whole time, for many weeks, in looking to the wants of the poor. He kept them independent, to a certain extent, by giving them employment that would not return him the money he gave in wages. He taught them also how to live comfortably on one-half what they supposed it possible, and, to set an example, and thereby fasten the lesson upon the people, he adopted the same style of living personally. He urged the people to follow his example, and give what was saved to the poor.

The example was catching, and the wealthy began to dispense with many luxuries, and live upon plain, wholesome food; and, as a natural consequence, instead of keeping the four village doc-

tors busy, they scarcely furnished employment for one.

Mr. Wilson labored for his neighbors day and night, and when nature could stand the strain no longer, he was taken with a severe fever, caused, however, in some measure, by a violent cold caught while visiting the unfortunate sufferers. He grew worse rapidly, and at length all hope of his recovery was given up by his physician, and the news flew like wildfire through the village that the friend of the poor and unfortunate was at the point of death. Prayers were offered for him at church, and in conference meeting, and many a poor widow, with prayers and tears, besought the God of the widow and the fatherless to spare their long-tried friend. How many earnest petitions were offered at the throne of grace, in many a humble dwelling, to spare the friend of the poor! But God, in his mercy saw fit to remove the tender-hearted man from this world of smiles and tears. His fever raged for many days; but at last it abated, and left him as helpless as an infant. The doctor said there was no hope; that he could not live twenty-four hours.

He requested that he might see and converse with Uncle Tim before he passed away. As the old Christian hero entered the room, Mr. Wilson's face lighted up, and, extending his hand, he said, faintly, "Uncle Timothy, I regret that personally I can be no longer useful to my neighbors; but I

have made my will, by which I hope to accomplish some good after I am gone; and I have appointed you as my executor. Give everybody my blessing, and remember especially the poor."

The effort weakened the dying man, and his eyes closed from very weariness.

"Shall I pray for you?" asked Uncle Tim.

"You may," replied Mr. Wilson; "but do not forget the poor and suffering when I am gone." Uncle Tim prayed for the sufferer, and asked if he would see either of the village pastors.

"I am unconverted," replied Mr. Wilson, "and it is now too late to attend to those things."

"It is never too late," broke in Uncle Tim. "Here comes our pastor, Brother White, who will pray for you. I fear you cannot live many minutes. Make your peace with God before you die, or it will then be too late."

"I have never, to my knowledge, been at enmity with God; but you can pray."

The young pastor knelt beside the bed, and poured forth his whole soul in prayer for the dying man. At first the invalid seemed to listen attentively; but a moment after his mind wandered to other subjects, and he murmured, "Be kind to the poor, assist the unfortunate, neglect not the widow and the fatherless; be kind — be kind — kind — to — the —" He did not finish the sentence; but, in the midst of its utterance, his soul returned to God who gave it.

The news of the good man's death flew through the village as on the wings of the wind, and many eyes were wet with tears at the sad tidings.

It so happened that in the next house lived a miserable wretch named Ahab Dunn, whose hand through life had been against every man. He had often been imprisoned for theft and brutality. Once he had nearly murdered his wife. At another time he made a cripple of his only child, who was vainly attempting to shield his mother from the horrible brutality of Ahab.

A few minutes after the death of Mr. Wilson, the wife of this Ahab Dunn came in hurriedly, and besought Uncle Tim and the pastor to hasten to her husband, who was dying. They obeyed the summons, and entered the room of the miserable man.

"I shall die soon," said Dunn, in a wild whisper. "Pray for me! for I feel the fires of hell already. Pray for me! Oh, pray for me! — pray — pray!"

"He has been trembling, and awfully fearing the torments of the other world for hours," remarked the wife. "He has led a wicked life; but I cannot bear to see him suffer so dreadfully. Oh, it is horrible to hear him rave!"

"He is an undoubting believer in endless torments," said Mr. White.

Uncle Tim looked in surprise.

"There is certainly no doubt on that subject," added the young pastor.

"What do you mean to imply?" asked Uncle Tim.

"Just what I said," replied the pastor, in a low voice. "Do you not perceive that the doctrine of endless hell punishment is almost a part of his being?"

"I see it," said Uncle Tim.

"Pray for me! pray for me!" exclaimed the dying wretch. "See, the fiends of hell are glaring on me! Pray! oh, pray!"

The pastor kneeled, and poured forth an earnest petition to Him who sent his Son to "call, not the righteous, but sinners to repentance," and who is "kind even unto the unthankful and the evil."

The wretch caught a gleam of hope, and when the pastor finished, he exclaimed, "Pray on! pray on! I may yet be saved from God's wrath and the flames of hell."

Uncle Tim kneeled, and prayed, as it seemed to the pastor, with a power and unction that none but he could attain to. The face of the dying man lighted up occasionally as the prayer was being offered, and it was evident that good had been accomplished. Uncle Tim and the pastor then offered consolation, after which each in turn again offered prayer.

"Deliverance!" shouted the dying man.—"Glory to God! I am saved!"

"Do you sincerely believe?" asked Uncle Tim.

"I believe," exclaimed the dying man, "I know, I realize that I am saved!" and, with a shout of joy at his great deliverance, the spirit of the hardened, miserable wretch went to God. About a half hour after, the visitors left the house.

"Is it not strange," said the pastor, "to think of the two death-bed scenes we have just witnessed?"

"It is a great mystery," replied the old man, "to realize that the good, warm-hearted, kind, and generous Mr. Wilson should die with no evidence of a change, and must, therefore, be doomed to a place and condition of endless torture, while that hardened, wretched, miserable, wicked Ahab Dunn will be taken home to God, and live in the sunshine of heaven forever! It is truly mysterious, and I have spent many anxious thoughts upon the subject. I do not object to the salvation of Ahab Dunn; but my heart would rebel were I to dwell long upon the case of Mr. Wilson, who to all eternity is lost in spite of all his goodness."

"Or, in other words," added the pastor, "if our creed is true, there is no reward for virtue, and no punishment for vice."

"Even so," said Uncle Tim.

"But," asked the pastor, "did you never think what is really the occasion of the horrible death-bed scenes, of which we hear and read so much?"

"I see it now," replied the old man. "All

those dreadful sufferings were caused by their belief in the punishment of the damned in the future. It is said that even Paine and Voltaire died in awful agonies under the fear of such torture."

"Or, in other words," added the pastor, "they are really claimed as believers in the fearful doctrine."

"I see it! I see it!" replied Uncle Tim.

"And yet," continued the pastor, "the death-bed of every person who does not believe in this doctrine is comparatively peaceful."

"Of course," replied the old man; "for the greatest evil they have to fear is as nothing in comparison with that which this awful doctrine contemplates. In fact, no one ever read of a truly horrible death-bed scene where the sufferer was not a confirmed believer in the dogma of endless punishment."

"Otherwise," added the pastor, "they would not be in such dreadful fear, and terrible mental agony. But, in considering it, what conclusion shall we draw?"

"That the ways of God are very mysterious," replied Uncle Tim, with eyes cast down. "I cannot fathom them. If God requires us to believe this awful dogma, why does he punish all, yes, all, without exception, who do really believe it?"

"Not a *believer* escapes," added the pastor, "while those who *disbelieve* never suffer as we have seen this man suffer. You say it is a great mystery;

but I trust that I obtained some glimmerings of light upon the subject, even before I came to reside in Masonville."

The two Christians here parted in deep thought.

CHAPTER XI.

JOHNNY COLE AND CHARLEY GIBBS.

"BOSTON JOURNAL! New York Tribune!" shouted Johnny Cole, as he passed up the main street of Masonville. "Boston Journal! New York Tribune! Halloo, Paul! that you? Going to be at home to night?"

"Yes," replied Paul; "anything particular?"

"Boston Journal, and New York Tribune! Thought I would come and see you and Uncle Tim, if you aint going away."

"We shall both be at home. Come early."

"I'll be there bright and early. Say, Paul — I — I wish I was big enough to knock you down, you mean scalawag!"

This last remark was not directed to Paul, but was intended solely for the edification of a dandily dressed young man, about twenty years of age, who, had, as he passed, purposely hit Johnny's papers, and scattered a few upon the sidewalk.

"Don't spoil your temper," said the dandy, looking back, and smiling, as he beheld Johnny's angry-looking countenance.

"Never you mind my temper, but look out for your hat," shouted Johnny, as the dandy's new silk hat rolled upon the dirty sidewalk, where it had been sent by a well-directed throw of a ball of mud.

The dandy caught up his hat, and retreated into the barber's shop near by.

"That was a dirty argument of yours, Johnny," said Paul.

"I don't care," exclaimed Johnny. "He was a dirty scamp to knock my papers in the dirt."

"So he was, Johnny; but is it right to return evil for evil?"

"Get out!" exclaimed Johnny. "You've lived with Uncle Tim till you're just like him."

"I wish I was like him," replied Paul; "for then I should be the best boy in Masonville."

"That's so every time," said Johnny. "But I'm nothing but a newsboy; and I can't be so good as you can."

"But, Johnny, would it not have been better to have taken the thing pleasantly, or at least would you not have felt better to have governed your temper?"

"I suppose I should; but taint reason to govern my temper. S'pose I'd smile on such a good-for-nothing scalawag as that? Not by a jugful."

"I know him," said Paul; "and he will have his revenge for that ball of mud."

"I aint afraid," exclaimed Johnny. "But where've you seen him?"

"Saw him yesterday. He was passing Uncle Tim's shop, when, seeing a dog gnawing a bone, he gave him a cut with his little cane that sent the poor animal yelping up the street. It's the disposition of that man to do anything for sport."

"Is that all you've seen of him?"

"No; I saw him, a few minutes after, knock a poor cat off the fence, by throwing a stone at her. He imagines that his fine clothes make a gentleman of him; but Uncle Tim, with his coarse, gray suit, would excel him in any spot or place."

"That's so!" exclaimed Johnny. "He aint no gentleman 'cause he's got on new clothes, and gets his hair greased and curled, and his whiskers and mustache colored black. He aint nobody, and always was."

Paul smiled. "His name is Charles Gibbs."

"I've read about Gibbs the pirate, and I guess this chap must be his son."

"There he comes," said Paul.

"I s'pose the gals think he's a beauty," said Johnny; "but he's got the hatefulest-looking eyes that ever I seed."

The stranger might have been called handsome; but there was a certain look or expression of the eyes, that, to a close observer, made him look almost forbidding.

"That was a capital joke," said Gibbs, smiling. "I don't care anything about my hat. How many papers did I knock out of your hand, my little man? Tell me the number, and I will purchase just double the quantity, to show you how much I admire your smartness."

The dandy stepped up to Johnny, as though to take some papers; but, quickly raising the little cane, he aimed a blow at the newsboy's head. Johnny, however, dodged, receiving the cane upon his shoulder, and the next instant he broke the stick into some three or four pieces. But during this time Gibbs had not been inactive, and, grasping Johnny by the shoulders, he shook the little newsboy until Paul grew alarmed. Paul was truly a boy of peace; but, thinking the case demanded his interference, he, by a dexterous movement, tripped up the dandy, who fell his length upon the muddy sidewalk.

Paul then seized the papers, and ran into a store for protection, where he was soon followed by Johnny.

"I guess he's got enough this time," exclaimed Johnny.

"What have you been doing, boys?" asked Mr. Solomon Smith, who kept the store.

"Been fighting," replied Paul.

"Been what?" exclaimed Mr. Smith, with a frown.

"I'm sorry for it," replied Paul; "but there's

no use in lying about it. Johnny and I have been fighting."

"Boys, I'm ashamed of you!"

"And I'm ashamed of myself," replied Paul.

"Do you ever expect to become respectable, Christian men?" asked Mr. Smith. "Is this the way you act after attending Sabbath school and divine service every Sunday, and one of you just experienced religion? How wicked boys are getting to be!"

"I don't care tew cents!" cried Johnny, angrily. "When a great tew-fisted man pitches into me, I vow if I'm to blame any way. I wish I could knock him into the middle of next week."

"What depravity!" exclaimed Mr. Smith. "If you keep out of state prison another year it's more than I expect. Commit sin, — a great, wicked sin! — and then glory in it! What a wicked and perverse generation! A boy, yes, a Sabbath-school scholar, comes right into the presence of a Christian like myself, and boasts of his evil deeds!"

This was too much for Johnny's already overburdened heart, and he retorted, "Get out! you aint half a Christian!"

"Why, Johnny! Johnny!" broke in Paul; "you must not talk so to Mr. Smith."

"Old Smith don't know nothing, and always did," cried Johnny.

"Oh, don't, Johnny; don't talk any more now!"

said Paul, coaxingly. "When you feel better we'll talk it all over together."

"Let him go on," said Mr. Smith, in a kind of martyr-like manner; "let him insult me. It's all I ought to expect of boys in these days."

"He don't mean what he says, Mr. Smith," said Paul. "He was shamefully used by a man, just now, and he don't know half what he says. He'll be sorry for it all before night."

"That's right," broke in Mr. Smith; "excuse him, of course. I'm the only one to blame. I'm always wrong."

"Oh, no, Mr. Smith, I don't mean that; but I mean that Johnny don't realize what he says."

"Anything for an excuse. When boys get so low as to engage in a street fight, any kind of evasion is to be expected. But mark the end of such a course. When the state prison and, probably, the gallows come, you may possibly regret that you did not listen to the advice of a Christian man, who was trying to warn you of the danger of your evil course."

Paul knew not what to say, and he looked around for inspiration from some surrounding object, when, glancing towards the street, he beheld the smiling countenance of Uncle Tim, beaming upon him like the sun just emerging from a dark cloud. Paul's face lighted up in an instant, but as quickly fell.

"Uncle Timothy," said Paul, "I've been fighting."

"I know it," replied the old man. "I saw pretty nearly all that occurred from my shop-window, and I came right here to see about it."

"Then why don't you scold me?"

"Never mind now," replied the old man; "there is always time enough for scolding."

"I wish you could have heard the saucy talk," broke in Mr. Smith. "Such awful depravity I scarcely ever witnessed."

"I am very sorry for what I have done," said Paul, "and if you will but listen, I will tell you all about it."

"Never mind about anything except the cause of the trouble," said Uncle Tim. "I have heard about all that has been said since you came into the store."

"I'm glad of it," said Paul, feeling much relieved. "I know that I was wrong; but, when I saw that man shake Johnny, I felt so alarmed that I couldn't help doing something."

Paul related the particulars of the cause of the altercation; but when he had finished, Johnny added a number of words concerning Paul's attempt to dissuade him from retaliation.

"And don't you wish, Johnny, that you had heeded Paul's advice?" asked Uncle Tim.

"I don't know hardly what I do think."

"But, Johnny, don't you know that the Bible tells us not to do such things?"

Johnny looked up to his Sabbath-school teacher, and, as he thought of the many talks between himself and Uncle Tim, as they sat in the class on Sabbath mornings, he could not find it in his heart to say aught that the old Christian warrior might deem wrong, and he answered, "Yes, Uncle Tim, I know it."

"And don't you know that you were very wrong in acting contrary to what the Bible teaches?"

"I suppose I was," replied Johnny; "but I was so mad that I didn't think."

"Why, Johnny, you are a little hero, to own up like that," exclaimed the old man, rubbing his hands. "What a noble Christian you'll make by and by! You need not look so incredulous, Johnny; for I've set my heart upon bringing you, and Paul, and all the rest of my Sabbath-school class into the church. And now, Johnny, to continue in the good way of repentance you have commenced, first of all you ought to ask pardon of Mr. Smith for being saucy."

"I'll ask his pardon if you say so," replied Johnny.

"Oh, don't mind me," said Mr. Smith, somewhat peevishly. "I'm of no consequence."

"But Johnny must do it for his own good, as well as in justice to you," replied Uncle Tim. "Come, Johnny, do your duty."

Johnny begged pardon of Mr. Smith.

"And now, Johnny," continued the old man, "can't you say that you forgive Mr. Gibbs?"

"That's pretty tough, Uncle Tim."

"So much the better and nobler the deed, then," said the old man. "You know what the Bible says. We must render good for evil, and forgive as we would be forgiven."

"Well, I'll forgive him," replied Johnny; "but I'll never sell another paper if I don't hate him like smoke!"

This was altogether too much for Uncle Tim, who dropped into a chair, his whole frame shaking with partially suppressed laughter.

Mr. Smith looked grave.

"I do not think, Johnny," said the old man, "that you are in exactly the right state of mind to continue this subject. I cannot quite commend your style of forgiveness; but I must heartily endorse your truth and frankness. We will resume this subject at some future period, when I will endeavor to show you how much better it would be for yourself, and how pleasing to God, to avoid all fighting and quarrelling."

CHAPTER XII.

EFFECT OF MR. WILSON'S DEATH UPON UNCLE TIM.

"UNCLE Timothy has been rather sober to-day," said Paul, as he met Johnny at the door that evening.

"I thought he laughed quite heartily in Smith's store," replied Johnny, "when I told him I would forgive Gibbs."

"Yes," said Paul; "but that is the only time he has laughed to-day; and I noticed that he looked very sober not a half minute after."

"Mr. Wilson's death, I guess."

"Yes," replied Paul, "he feels very badly about it; but there is something else which I don't exactly understand, though I begin to mistrust what it is."

As the boys entered the room where Uncle Tim sat reading the Bible, there were the same cheerful tone and the same pleasant greeting from the old man; but it was simply from the force of habit, and the next instant a shadow passed over his face. Little was said for nearly half an hour.

"Uncle Timothy," said Paul, "I suppose you

are thinking of Mr. Wilson. I wish I could comfort you. I shall never forget his kindness to me, or how good he was to the poor."

"He was possessed of a truly kind heart," added the old man. "His death was a sad event."

"Yes, sad to us," said Paul, "but joyous to him. Do you think he has entered heaven yet?"

Uncle Tim was silent.

Both Paul and Johnny looked up in surprise. It was the first time they had ever known their teacher to fail answering promptly one of their religious questions.

"Mr. Wilson was not a Christian, — was he?" asked Paul.

"No," replied the old man; "he was an unbeliever."

"I guess he isn't an unbeliever now," said Paul.

Uncle Tim looked up in surprise.

"He can't be an unbeliever when he sees so plainly," added Paul.

"Of course not," said the old man; "but if we adopt such a theory, all will become believers."

"They can't help believing; cause they'll know," added Johnny, who was never particularly backward in expressing his personal convictions.

"Uncle Timothy," said Paul, in a very serious tone, "you have taught me to love God and our

Saviour, and I do certainly love them very much, because I think they are so very good; and when I think how good they are, I could hardly help loving them, if I should try ever so hard not to. But if I should find that they were not good, I couldn't love them any more."

Uncle Tim made no reply.

"You've taught me not to cover up my sins," continued Paul; "and if I'm sinning, I'll confess it. I might say I loved God, if he was bad; but I should only be lying, and the more I professed to love him, the more I should lie about it. Don't you think it would be very wicked for anybody to lie like that, Uncle Timothy?"

"Yes, my son," replied the old man; "never lie about your religion. Above all things, always speak the truth."

"I knew I was right," said Paul, "and I can't love God if he isn't good. I couldn't if I should try to. But I know that God is good, and I know that he loves Mr. Wilson, because you have taught me just like that."

"In what manner?" asked the old man.

"Why, only last Sabbath you told us that we must try to love everybody, or try to be like God; but if God don't love everybody, I shan't be like him if I love everybody. If God hates Mr. Wilson, I ought to hate him, to be like God."

Uncle Tim looked up in astonishment.

"And I remember," continued Paul, "that our

minister said that we ought to love everybody because God loved everybody. And don't you recollect the sermon when he said that God was kind unto the unthankful and the evil, and if he was kind to them he must love them? He said that God hated all sin, and therefore he wanted all sin to cease; but he loved sinners, and therefore he sent his Son, our Saviour, to die for them, and save them from sin. He told us that God sent Jesus to save us because he loved us, and not because he hated us."

"That is true," replied the old man. "'God so *loved the world*, that he gave his only begotten Son' to die for us."

"I knew I was right," exclaimed Paul. "And don't you recollect that our minister said we ought to love all our neighbors because God loved them? and also that if God hated any one of our neighbors, he would have commanded us to hate them, and if God hated one single one of our neighbors, we should have to hate him also, to be like God?"

"That seems very plain," said Uncle Tim; "But my mind has been somewhat confused since Mr. Wilson's death."

"The reason why I remember the sermon so well," said Paul, "was because, after I had listened to it all, I heard Mr. Cole talk it all over. He thinks everything of our minister, and when I went to his shop yesterday, he was talking about the last sermon."

"And what did he say about it?"

"Why, you know that our pastor said that unbelievers were damned or condemned as long as they were unbelievers, and that when they believed they were saved; because the Bible says that believers shall be saved."

"I remember," replied Uncle Tim.

"Well, Mr. Cole said that Mr. Wilson was saved because he was now a true believer."

"Perhaps it will make no difference as to what he believes in the next world," remarked the old man.

"Then," replied Paul, "he stands as good a chance as any one else."

"I see plainly," said the old man, "that, whichever view we take of the case, logic is ever on the side of Mr. Wilson's salvation. But what says the Bible?"

"Mr. Cole says that the Bible teaches that Mr. Wilson will be saved."

"Brother Cole is an excellent Christian man," said Uncle Tim; "but he may be in error in this matter."

"Not if he has the Bible on his side, is he?"

Uncle Tim was a man of the deepest piety; but various doctrinal points of the Bible he had never particularly investigated, and, when the question of Mr. Wilson's ultimate salvation arose in his mind, his ideas upon the subject revolved in a confused mass. As he read his Bible, many passages

loomed up clearly for an instant; but the next moment a score of theological dogmas, to which he had always given tacit consent, arose in his mind, and again all was darkness and confusion. For the time being, even the mind of Paul Mason was clearer than that of his benefactor, upon the teachings of Scripture concerning the final salvation of those who *chance* to die unbelievers.

"I'll tell you what I'm going to do," said Paul, as he accompanied Johnny to the door late in the evening.

"What's that?"

"I'm going to study the Bible harder, and commit a good many more verses to memory, and then I'll ask Uncle Tim and our minister and Mr. Cole all about a good many other passages."

"If you do, I shall," said Johnny.

"Then I certainly shall," exclaimed Paul; "and I'll commence to-night. And now, Johnny, if you will only try to be a Christian, and never mind what the other boys say, I'll wait, and we will join the church together."

"How can I as long as I sell newspapers?"

"Uncle Timothy says you can, and, furthermore, the Bible does not tell us to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, newsboys excepted."

A broad smile covered Johnny's face; but he replied, "I'll try. I will, as sure as you live!"

"I knew you would," exclaimed Paul.

"I'll begin to-night."

"That's right. Don't forget your promise."

"It seems just as though Uncle Tim was the scholar and I the teacher," said Paul to himself, as he retired to bed. "But the next time I get to talking upon *that subject*, I'll tell just what I think, and I'll quote a lot of passages of Scripture too. I might have quoted a dozen to-night. I wish I had."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CONFERENCE MEETING.

THE next evening, at the conference meeting, the young pastor spoke of the death of Mr. Wilson and delivered a fine eulogy upon his character, distinguished as he was for love and charity that Christian professors might well emulate with profit to themselves and the church.

The next speaker was Mr. Smith, who alluded to the death of Mr. Wilson as a warning to old and young; "for," continued he, "although kind and generous in all his dealings with the world, and especially to the poor, nevertheless he died without hope and without God in the world, and his soul is forever lost."

A murmur of disapprobation passed through the assembly; but Mr. Smith was used to such manifestations, and he went on. "It cannot be denied," said he, "that he was an unconverted man; and therefore, although I honor his virtues, I feel it my duty to say, that, without faith in the Saviour, no one can be saved. Mr. Wilson was not a Christian, was not converted, never professed faith in Jesus, and, of course, he must be lost forever.

But, again, look at the wicked, hardened Ahab Dunn, now in heaven itself. He was converted upon his death-bed, and died in the blessed hope of immortal life. Repent, ye wicked sinner, ere it is too late. Repent, ye moral men, ere death shall overtake you, or you, too, may share the sad fate of Mr. Wilson, who, with all his goodness of heart, failed to save his own soul. Repent, all ye unconverted, and rejoice like the departed Ahab Dunn, who is now singing the song of the Lamb, while Mr. Wilson is sharing the fate of every lost soul."

The congregation were indignant. As Mr. Smith ceased speaking, Mr. Cole rose, and exclaimed, "If what we have just heard is religion, I am not a Christian; but I know that such doctrines are no part of the gospel, or, in other words, the glad tidings of great joy which we are promised shall be to all people. Christ could never have taught such a system of injustice and cruelty. Talk about the great and good Mr. Wilson being lost to all eternity! I had rather die like him, than like the guilty wretch who has been held up as a dying saint. Is there no reward in heaven for virtue? Are we to pack heaven with all the wicked wretches of the world, and fill some imaginary pit of endless burning with all our good citizens? I tell you, my friends, it is a libel upon God, a shame upon the religion we profess, a false accusation against our blessed Redeemer. I know

the blessed Bible tells us that God is kind unto the unthankful and the evil; but I do not believe he is more kind to an evil-hearted wretch who *happens*, yes, *happens* to repent before death, than he is to those who are charitable, tender-hearted, and generous."

Mr. Cole continued in this strain for some minutes, and when he ceased, a score of eyes were turned upon Uncle Tim, who, in response to the evident appeal, arose and spoke of the virtues of Mr. Wilson. "But," he continued, "Mr. Smith has stated precisely the doctrines of our church creed. I would that I could give the least consolation; but I cannot. I have not one objection to Mr. Ahab Dunn being saved from all his sins, and so enter the heaven of heavens; but my heart rebels against the thought of the endless damnation of that good man, Mr. Wilson. My poor heart has rebelled ever since the death of our kind-hearted neighbor, and I will not attempt to conceal it. I thought I was reconciled to God; but when I think that God could have saved this truly good man, and did not, it is all dark, *dark*, DARK to my soul, and I cannot disguise it."

Mr. Cole rose to his feet as Uncle Tim ceased speaking; but contention had fled from his heart. His face lighted up with holy joy, and, with a tone of tenderness and deep feeling, that few thought him capable of, he said, "Human creeds weigh little in the presence of Almighty God.

The doctrines and commandments of men, when incorporated into church creeds, are of no binding force when they impeach the character of our heavenly Father, or lessen the love of our blessed Lord and Saviour. Paul says, in 1 Timothy, second chapter and fourth verse, 'God will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth.' Jesus says, 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me; and this he spake signifying what death he should die.'"

The audience looked up in surprise as the young pastor gave utterance to a hearty amen; but whether it meant that he agreed with Mr. Cole or not, no one knew.

As Mr. Cole sat down, Lucy Smith rose and repeated, "'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin,' not of the elect, but 'the sin of the world!' Paul says, 'The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who had subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.' 'This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.' Jesus says, 'I am the resurrection,' and therefore no one can be raised except through our blessed Redeemer; and 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;' furthermore, 'As in Adam all die, even so *in Christ* shall all be made alive.' Mark the words, not *out of Christ*, but *in Christ*

shall *all* be made alive. 'Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! . . . . For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen!'"

"Amen!" responded the pastor. "Amen and Amen!" echoed Mr. Cole.

Now Paul and Johnny had conversed together for nearly an hour before the conference meeting and the burden of their conversation was Mr. Wilson; and during the talk Johnny had become fully convinced that his friend understood the whole subject of man's future destiny in all its bearings, and doubted not that Paul would be able to settle the whole question of man's condition in the spirit world.

"Get up," whispered Johnny, nudging his friend with his elbow, "get up, and tell them all about it."

Paul hesitated a moment, and then rose to his feet and began: "One who was always kind to me has just passed through the dark valley of the shadow of death. We have lost a friend who was dear to us, and especially dear to the poor, and I mourn for them; but I do not mourn for him, because he is now with God and our Saviour, who will both do just right by him. I know that our heavenly Father will do nothing evil, either to Mr. Wilson or to any one else; for God will always do good, and he

will never do evil. The apostle Paul says, 'I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others who have no hope.' It is only a few months since I professed faith in the gospel, and I suppose I ought not to try to teach others who are so much older than I am; but, as for myself, I know that Mr. Wilson is in the hands of our heavenly Father, and I do not want him anywhere else; because I will have faith in God."

There was a chorus of amens as Paul finished, to which the pastor added the apostle Paul's charge to young Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, if spirit, in faith, in purity."

CHAPTER XIV.

SOLOMON SMITH'S THEOLOGICAL DEFEAT.

At the close of the conference meeting Mr. Cole shook hands with Paul, and congratulated him upon being possessed of so much faith in God. The example of Mr. Cole was followed by a number of others, including Mr. Gray, who, contrary to his usual custom, had taken no part in the evening's conference. The young pastor also took Paul by the hand, and offered a few words of encouragement. As Mr. White turned away, Uncle Tim laid his arm softly across Paul's shoulder.

"Have I done wrong to-night?" asked Paul, as he looked up into the face of his benefactor.

"Not in the least, my son," replied the old man. "You have done right. But why do you ask?"

"Well, I hardly know," said Paul. "I did not know, however, but that you might think I ought to have said nothing about Mr. Wilson."

"I do not think so," replied Uncle Tim. "I trust I shall never condemn any one for possessing great faith. Faith that can always trust God and

our Saviour is what we want, and we cannot have too great a share of such confidence."

As the pastor turned to leave the vestry, Mr Smith said, "Brother White, I am, as you know, a plain-spoken man, and I am free to say that I thought it your duty, as one who breaks to us the bread of life, to speak boldly upon the question raised to-night. In this way you might, in some measure, prevent the heretical opinions which I am pained to know are cherished by Brother Cole."

"And I am free to say," replied the pastor, "that I did not so judge in regard to my duty. I am here to break to you the bread of life; but with the crusts and husks of endless death I have nothing to do."

"Is it possible, Brother White, that I understand you correctly? Are you unwilling to warn the unconverted of the endless hell that awaits them?"

"That expression is not in the Bible."

"True the expression does not occur in the Scriptures, but, considering the influence of Mr. Wilson's death upon weak minds, you might, at least, have referred to the case of the Rich Man and Lazarus."

"But," replied the pastor, "that parable does not apply to the case in hand; for, in all that account, it is not even intimated that Lazarus was a believer, or that the rich man was not a Christian.

If it is a true account of what literally transpired, we are led to believe that Lazarus was blessed because he was poor, while the rich man was tormented because he was wealthy; and, furthermore, I challenge the world to show any other doctrine, provided the story is a true narrative. If, however, we take the story simply as a parable, we see the fate of the Jewish nation portrayed by the rich man, and the condition of the Gentiles illustrated by Lazarus."

Quite a number of the congregation had gathered near, and listened to the pastor with no small degree of surprise, and more especially as they perceived the truth of his assertions.

"I grant what you say," replied Mr. Smith; "but certainly there are hundreds of other passages that might have been quoted with much profit; for example, 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.'"

"That passage, Brother Smith, as you are well aware, was spoken in relation to some eighteen persons killed by the falling of the tower of Siloam, and others slain by Herod; and Jesus tells his followers, 'Except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish,' or, in other words, meet with a violent death. How can we apply such a passage to the departed good man?"

Mr. Smith saw his error, but was not to be so easily vanquished, and, looking straight into the

pastor's face, he said, "Those who blaspheme against the Holy Ghost are endlessly lost."

"Then," replied the pastor, "there is no hope for Ahab Dunn, who died a believer; but Mr. Wilson never accused God or the Saviour of having an unclean spirit. The passage applies to Ahab Dunn, if to any one in our time."

"I grant," said Mr. Smith, "that Mark tells us, that Jesus spoke to the Jews of this terrible punishment, 'because they said he hath an unclean spirit;' and I own that Mr. Wilson never accused God or the Saviour of being possessed of such a spirit; but there is a passage that all are familiar with, and it is our great bulwark of defence in support of the doctrine of which I have spoken. Should we be driven from every other passage, that alone would be sufficient to establish our creed. You know to what passage I refer."

"I do," replied the pastor, "and when that passage fails, the whole structure of future endless punishment falls."

"I suppose it must," replied Mr. Smith.

"I know to what passage you refer," said Mr. Cole, "and I am satisfied that we have all been mistaken in regard to it; for there are so many other passages which teach the ultimate salvation of all men from sin, that this cannot contain the doctrine of the endless punishment of any soul."

"You, of course, refer to the forty-sixth verse

of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew," said Uncle Tim. "I have been often tempted to abandon the doctrine of endless misery; but that passage always stops further search."

"Why, Uncle Tim!" exclaimed Lucy, "do you believe in endless misery?"

This question, so unexpected to all, fell like a thunder-clap upon the ears of the father, while the pastor could hardly believe his senses.

"I do not know at this moment whether I believe or disbelieve that awful dogma," replied Uncle Tim.

"It is an important question," said Lucy; "and would it not be well to find out what we really do believe on so momentous a subject?"

"Do *you* believe in endless punishment?" asked Mr. Cole of Lucy.

"I do not," replied Lucy.

The young pastor stared in surprise.

"Lucy," said Mr. Smith, in a sorrowful voice, "do you believe the Bible?"

"Most assuredly I do, father. Why do you ask such a singular question?"

"But why do you deny our church creed?"

"Because it is opposed to the Bible," replied Lucy.

"I do not understand you," said the father. "Have we not just alluded to a passage which teaches that unbelievers shall be punished eternally?"

"As I am put upon the witness stand," replied Lucy, "I shall not shrink from being a bold witness for Jesus. The chapter to which you refer does not teach that doctrine."

"Why, Lucy!" exclaimed two or three ladies at once.

"If I am wrong, correct me then," said Lucy.

"True," replied Mr. Smith, "the words are not there, but it means so."

"I thought it meant what it said."

"Of course it does."

"Well, then," replied Lucy, "Mr. Wilson, though an unbeliever, is saved."

Two or three ladies held up their hands, and exclaimed, "Don't, Lucy; don't talk so!"

"Excuse me, ladies," said Lucy; "but I cannot hear the Saviour falsely accused, without at least trying to defend his great, loving heart."

"Go on, Sister Smith," exclaimed Mr. Cole, with delight depicted in his every feature.

"Well, then," said Lucy, "do not all of you know perfectly well that Jesus says nothing about those rewarded and punished as being believers or unbelievers? On the contrary he is speaking of those who had not performed good works, which he enumerates as clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, and visiting the sick and imprisoned."

"True! true!" exclaimed Mr. Cole, clapping his hands. "Glory to God! Mr. Wilson performed all these good works, and if the passage

refers to a future life, Mr. Wilson is saved with an everlasting salvation sure!"

"According to the twenty-fifth of Matthew," continued Lucy, "Mr. Wilson, the unbeliever, stands a better chance at this moment than many of our believing church-members."

Mr. Smith was silent. He saw plainly that works, and works alone, were the conditions of *the kind of salvation* referred to in Matt. xxv.

He could not reply to the argument of his daughter; for he well knew that she spoke the truth. But Mr. Smith still clung to the time-honored creed, and, turning to Lucy, he asked, "Where have you learned this? Who has been poisoning your mind with this heresy?"

"Is it heresy, father, to believe the Bible?"

"This matter shall not pass without being sifted to the very core, and the heretic unmasked," exclaimed Mr. Smith. "I see through the whole mystery."

"Then do explain," said Lucy, looking up into his face in a manner that had never yet failed to bring a pleased expression to the father's countenance; but his face expressed no pleasure.

"Brother White," said the father, with cutting sarcasm, "this is your doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

"He has never exchanged a word with me upon the subject," replied Lucy.

"Then how have you learned it?" exclaimed Mr. Smith.

"I think we had better go home," said Mr. Gray.

"Yes, it is getting late," added Uncle Tim. "Let us seek our homes, and all bow in humble prayer to God for light and guidance. He will, I trust, lead us into all truth."

Mr. Smith was inclined to continue the discussion; but the audience moved towards the door, and in another minute the vestry was vacant.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FUNERAL OF MR. WILSON.

At the hour appointed for the funeral of Mr. Wilson, the people gathered from far and near to pay honors to the deceased friend of the poor.

Mr. Wilson, although over forty years of age, was never married. His body was carried to the church, which was crowded to its utmost capacity.

Before Mr. White ascended the pulpit, he glanced at the pale face of the deceased. As he gazed upon the tenement of clay, there was an audible sound of weeping, throughout the room, from the poor whom he had often assisted.

The pastor mounted the pulpit stairs, and took his seat. All eyes were turned upon his pale face, as he rose, and gave out the opening hymn; after which he read 1 Cor. xv. During his prayer, in which he seemed to mount, as on angels' wings, to the very portals of heaven, the sobs increased until half the audience were in tears. The prayer was ended, the second hymn was sung, and the pastor rose to speak of the departed. There was the stillness of the grave throughout the crowded assembly as the preacher stood with his whole frame

shaking with the deep feelings of his heart. For a moment he seemed unable to articulate a word; but, casting his eyes to heaven for strength, he began in a voice that thrilled the whole audience, —

"A man, great in sympathy, great in goodness, great in works of love, has passed away. The blessings of the widow and the fatherless, the poor and unfortunate, have followed him to the brink of the dark valley of the shadow of death; but we could accompany him no farther, and he passed away, apparently alone. But who can tell of the company of white-robed angels, who, with golden harps, wafted on high the spirit of our departed brother, and the benefactor of the lowly? The pure in heart shall see God; and I can almost imagine that I see his purified spirit basking in the sunshine of our heavenly Father, and reclining upon the bosom of Jesus, the Saviour of a lost world; and, gazing upon the Father, and looking into the face of the Redeemer, he ever and anon exclaims, in the language of the once unbelieving Thomas, 'My Lord, and my God!'

"God loves goodness, and he loved our departed friend, and his love is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Many waters cannot quench his love, neither can death obliterate it; for, in the language of Paul, as recorded in Holy Writ, 'I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any

other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'* We are often told that God and the Saviour love us while alive, but hate us when dead; that the door of God's love and mercy is open while life lasts; but that death often annihilates all kindness; or, in other words, neither God nor the Saviour decide the question. Life is the cause of his love for some of us, while death causes most of his wrath and hate. But I repeat it, that, like the apostle Paul, I am persuaded that neither life nor death can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

But we will not attempt to follow the speaker in a discourse whose every sentence reached the hearts of the most obdurate, and melted the congregation to tears, — tears of thanksgiving for the great and precious promises of Holy Writ.

There was one noticeable feature among the audience, and that was that not only was every member of Uncle Tim's new class, including, of course, Paul and Johnny, evidently in full sympathy with the preacher, but the sentiments of all the old man's former class were plainly in harmony with those of Mr. White. The mystery, however, is easily solved. Uncle Tim had constantly taught his scholars the *spirit* of the doctrine held by the young pastor, and this spirit or essence of the

* Romans viii. 38, 39.

doctrine had enabled its possessors to see clearly the truth of the pastor's enlarged faith, and they were not backward in making an open avowal of their opinions.

Uncle Tim scarcely removed his eyes from the pastor, though he could not always see him from the flood of tears. Mr. Gray, the superintendent, was almost as much affected as the old Christian hero. Mr. Cole fairly cried for joy, while Lucy, whose heart was full, sat tearful, but peaceful, beside her father, who knew not whether to condemn or join in the general sympathy.

We will pass over the details of the scene that presented itself as the audience passed the coffin, to look, for the last time, upon the face of the honored dead. We have not space or time to describe the long cortege of mourners that followed the hearse to the tomb. The earthly house of his tabernacle was laid in the cold receptacle of the dead, to moulder and decay; but we will not sorrow as others who have no hope; "for we know that if this earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

"My son," said Uncle Tim, as he returned late in the evening from the next church-meeting, "there was a vote taken to-night upon the admission into the church of yourself and the other three members of our class who have experienced relig-

ion, and you were all accepted unanimously. Have you any objection to joining the church next Sabbath?"

Paul looked up in surprise, as he replied, "I will do so if you wish it; but I thought if I should wait a few weeks I might get Johnny Cole to join too."

"Is that all your objection?"

"Yes, all."

"Then I would much like to have you join now, and I will make it an especial part of my duty to look after Johnny."

"Who got them to vote upon our names to-night?"

"I proposed it."

"Will the other three members of your class join next Sabbath?"

"There will be nothing to hinder, unless you choose to wait."

"Then I do not choose to wait."

After retiring for the night, Paul lay awake for some time, wondering what had caused this sudden desire on the part of Uncle Tim to have those connected with his class unite with the church at so short a notice.

"It must be that Uncle Timothy has some particular reason," continued Paul, to himself. "I noticed that he prayed very earnestly for our minister to-night, — more so than ever before. I wonder if he is in danger of being turned away?"

Mr. White had always been favored with large congregations; but, the Sabbath following the funeral of Mr. Wilson, the church was filled even to the galleries, to listen to one who had dared to risk his whole popularity in defence of the departed dead.

The services were made doubly interesting by the fact of Paul and his three classmates being taken into church. The effect of this event upon Johnny was quite different from what Paul had anticipated; for, instead of retarding, it simply hastened the period when the newsboy would also unite himself to the church.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FISHING-PARTY.

"MORNING papers! Account of the robbery in Masonville!" shouted Johnny Cole, on the next Tuesday morning, as he passed Uncle Tim's shop. "Morning papers! Full particulars of the robbery!"

"Good-morning!" said Paul, coming to the shop door.

"Halloo, Paul! anything new!"

"It is Uncle Timothy's birthday, you know."

"No danger of my forgetting that," said Johnny. "I'll be on hand to-night."

"I knew you would," replied Paul; "but Mr. Gray is coming in about an hour to carry us to Long Pond to fish."

"Who's going?"

"Uncle Timothy, Mr. Gray, Mr. Cole, our minister, and you and I, if you wish."

"Like to tip-top! and much obliged. I'll sell my papers in a jiffy, and be on hand. Papers selling like hot cakes on account of the robbery of Mr. Jones's store last night. How is Uncle Tim? All right?"

"Yes," replied Paul; "just like himself again."

"He feels all right, I guess, about Mr. Wilson."

"Oh, yes; that conference meeting, and the talk after it was over, and then the funeral sermon, made a convert of him."

"I knew he would come out all right," said Johnny; "because he always does."

"I thought so, too," added Paul; "but you see that he had hardly thought about it before. He had kind o' skimmed over that part of the Bible, thinking it was better to attend to the things that were plain to him. Uncle Timothy don't know anything about his class and the other folks coming to-night; but I am going to leave the back-door key in Mr. Smith's store, and when we get back, I expect we shall have a house full."

"That's splendid!" exclaimed Johnny.

At this moment a gentleman asked for a paper, and, a minute after, the newsboy was shouting papers, and before Mr. Gray arrived, he had sold the last copy, and was ready for a start.

As they rode towards Long Pond, Uncle Tim wore his old, pleasant look; Mr. Gray was in the best of humor. Mr. Cole pointed out to the pastor, and gave the names of the different localities, and the names of the owners of the various dwellings and farms which they passed; the pastor abandoned himself to the pleasures of the day, while Johnny and Paul were having what the newsboy termed "a gay time."

When they arrived at the pond, the whole party entered the boat, and proceeded to cast in their lines. Mr. White had scarcely dropped in his fish-line before he had a glorious nibble, and the next moment he pulled in a fine perch.

"Victory!" exclaimed the lucky sportsman.

"Golly!" cried Johnny, "if our minister aint catched the first fish. My gracious, what a whopper!"

"Rather cruel sport, after all," said Mr. White, as he extricated his hook from the jaws of the fish.

"We will endeavor to lessen the evil as much as possible," remarked Uncle Tim, as he severed the backbone of the floundering fish, just back of the head, which instantly ended the life of the victim.

"You have taught me a lesson," said the pastor; "and never again will I cause even a fish to die by inches."

"It is simply a deed of justice towards our victims," added Uncle Tim; "and, by endeavoring to alleviate suffering, whether among men or the brute creation, we educate our own hearts, and make them capable of enjoying, in a tenfold degree, all the blessings of life."

"My gracious!" exclaimed Johnny, as the pastor drew in another perch; "seems to me our minister is going to catch all the fish."

"And you have become a fisher of men," said

Mr. Cole, as Johnny's hook caught in his uncle's coat.

Johnny offered all sorts of apologies; but Mr. Cole protested that no harm was done, and the hook was soon loosened from the garment.

"Victory!" exclaimed Mr. White, as he drew in the third fish, which proved to be a horned-pout.

"Hold!" cried Uncle Tim.

The old man was too late; for the pastor, in endeavoring to take up his victim, had received a wound from one of the pout's horns that forced the captor to cry out with pain.

Uncle Tim put a speedy end to the life of the fish, as he said, "Bathe and squeeze the wound in the water, and it will be almost well before we get home."

"That is good news," said the pastor; "but it was a scaly trick."

"It is what I should call a very pointed argument to let him alone," remarked Mr. Cole; "and pretty sharp practice too."

The place where the boat was anchored proved to be a very fortunate location for the fishing-party; for quite a number of fish were caught by each member of the boat's crew. Now it so happened that Johnny had caught an eel, and, with a triumphant exclamation, he jumped to his feet. As he stooped, however, to secure the squirming fish, Mr. Gray changed his position, and that, added

to the motions of Johnny, caused the little boat to rock considerably. Johnny lost his balance, and, stumbling, trod upon the eel, the boat gave a lurch, and the newsboy went into the water head first, and the next instant Paul saw the tops of Johnny's boots disappear from sight.

"What was that?" exclaimed the pastor, turning round.

"Boy overboard!" shouted Mr. Gray.

Johnny could swim like a duck, and the next instant his head appeared above water.

"What are you doing out there?" asked Paul.

"Doing?" replied Johnny, a trifle vexed; "why, I'm swimming."

"Correct!" said Mr. Gray, determined to enjoy the accident, seeing there was no danger.

"Tip-top weather for bathing!" exclaimed Mr. Cole, with a smile.

"What did you jump in for?" asked Mr. White, who did not quite understand the affair.

"Jump in for!" replied Mr. Gray. "Why, you see, Johnny saw a fine, large fish in the water, and dove to catch it. Shouldn't wonder a bit if he had one stowed away in each pocket."

"How do you feel, Johnny?" asked Uncle Tim, as he assisted the newsboy into the boat.

"I feel dreadful wet," replied Johnny, trying to smile.

"This kind of water is very damp," said Mr. Gray.

"It looks rather moist," added Mr. Cole, with a smile.

Johnny was set ashore to dry his clothes in the sun, during which process he wore a coat belonging to Paul, who also chose to land with his friend. The clothes were hardly dry when he put them on, and, hallooing to the fishers that they were going to explore the woods somewhat, Paul and Johnny set out.

Little knowing the unseen dangers before them, the two boys walked some half mile or more into the thickest of the woods to a large, steep, rocky hill, which they proceeded to explore. Both Paul and Johnny had been to the top of Rocky Hill, as it was called; but they had penetrated few of its caverns and many recesses. This they now proposed to do.

The journey up hill was slow and toilsome, and the young explorers often turned aside to examine some newly discovered recess or diminutive cave. Sometimes they would stop for a moment to rest, and talk of the things which they saw.

They had both sat down to rest in a small nook or recess, when they heard one of the large loose stones rattle down the hill-side.

The boys were no cowards; but both started at the unexpected sound, and they looked at each other, wondering who could be in the vicinity, in such close proximity to themselves. A moment

after they distinguished the sound of some one making his way towards them.

In the direction of the slowly advancing footsteps the bushes grew quite thick; but Paul managed to look through them, when, to his surprise and alarm, he discovered Charles Gibbs slowly advancing towards the very nook where they stood. Paul motioned with his hand to Johnny to keep perfect silence, as he noiselessly retreated to the spot where the latter was standing.

"Don't make the least noise," whispered Paul; "Gibbs is coming."

"What shall we do?" asked Johnny, in a whisper.

"Hush!" replied Paul. "Don't even whisper; but follow me."

Paul ascended to a little recess within the nook in which he had been seated, to shield themselves, if possible, when, to his surprise, he found they were in the entrance to a dark cavern, into which the two boys noiselessly but rapidly retreated. The way was so narrow that only one could be admitted at a time, and, as Paul led the way, his body so nearly filled the entrance that he could distinguish nothing before him. He had proceeded some five or six feet upon his hands and knees, to where the passage abruptly terminated by opening into a small cave below, when down he went head first.

Paul attempted to rise; but before he could do

so, Johnny landed upon his back with a stifled exclamation of "Golly!"

"Hush!" whispered Paul. But the next instant he came near uttering an exclamation of surprise himself, as he rose and extended his hands, which came in contact with a piece of cloth. At this instant he heard Gibbs outside, who had evidently stopped to set down a load he carried, preparatory to entering the cave.

Paul had noticed Gibbs's load, and wondered; but, as his hands came in contact with the piece of cloth, he thought he saw clearly through the whole mystery. "Gibbs," thought he, "is evidently the person who robbed Mr. Jones's store last night, and the plunder is secreted in this very cave, with, perhaps, the exception of the load he is now bringing. But he will undoubtedly open his bundle to divide before he enters the cave, otherwise he will find it very difficult to make an entrance, and, furthermore, he will stop to rest before he even undoes his load."

These thoughts passed through Paul's mind in a moment, and, putting his hand upon Johnny, as a sign for perfect silence, he looked around; for his eyes were becoming unaccustomed to the darkness, and there was also now considerable light admitted through the entrance. The first glance confirmed him in all his suspicions; for the little cave contained as many costly dry goods and fancy articles as an ordinary man could carry. Gibbs had evi-

dently been obliged to make two loads of his plunder, and was now bringing from some other place of concealment the second load.

As Paul glanced round, he heard Gibbs entering the cave. Both Paul and Johnny stood motionless, expecting the next moment to feel the weight of the burglar's hand upon them; but the intruder simply dropped a bundle of something, and retired for a new parcel. As he left, Paul looked around for some place to conceal himself and Johnny, when, to his joy, he saw, leading from the cave, and slanting downward, a place with an entrance just large enough to admit one at a time. The recess or fissure in the rock would hold, perhaps, three persons, but contained considerable water, which increased in depth as he advanced; for Paul, followed by Johnny, entered the little nook feet first, and both had been concealed some two or three minutes before the entrance of Gibbs in person.

Gibbs struck a light, and proceeded to place the stolen goods just brought with the first instalment. He then opened a small carpet-bag, took out some cold meat and bread, and ate his dinner with evident relish; after which he took a drink from a suspicious-looking bottle; when he produced a pocket mirror, and commenced an elaborate toilet, preparatory to quitting the cave.

Paul could not see these preparations; but Johnny watched them with evident approval.

Last of all Gibbs commenced to clean his boots with a piece of cloth; but, during this last operation, his hands became quite dirty, and must be washed; and just as Johnny was congratulating himself upon the speedy departure of his dreaded enemy, the latter took a tin cup and came directly to the place of Johnny's concealment, evidently to procure water. As the tin cup entered the nook, Johnny raised himself upon his hands (which were spread widely apart) to the top of the hollow, and shrunk back as far as possible, and, to his joy, the water was procured without further discovery.

Gibbs washed his hands in the small tin cup, and threw the dirty water into another small fissure leading from the cave, when Johnny supposed that he would lay aside the vessel and depart; but in a moment the cup was again thrust in to be refilled. Johnny had not time to rise upon his hands before the dipper and hand of Gibbs came in contact with his face and breast.

Gibbs gave a start, and the next instant held his candle to the place of concealment, where he saw Johnny's frightened face, which he instantly recognized.

"I've caught you, have I, my little friend?" said Gibbs, as he looked at Johnny with a wicked smile, or grin.

Johnny could scarcely command his breath, and said nothing.

"Come, my little man," continued Gibbs, "just

crawl out here and give a slight account of yourself. Don't keep me waiting, for I'm just in the least bit of a hurry. A trifle faster, if you please, or I shall be obliged to assist you, very materially, in your movements. A little help, I see, is needed;" and Gibbs seized Johnny by the collar and pulled him out.

"Glad to see me, no doubt!" exclaimed Gibbs, as Johnny stood trembling before him, not knowing how to commence his plea for mercy.

"Give us your hand," continued the tormentor; "and now, in as few words as possible (for time is somewhat precious), just give me an account of the reason of your being here."

Johnny here narrated the fishing adventure, including his ducking, his being set ashore, how he had left the pond, proceeded to explore the woods, and ending by entering the cave, omitting, however, all allusions to Paul.

"And when you heard me coming you concealed yourself," said Gibbs.

"Yes," replied Johnny.

"That don't look at all friendly," said Gibbs.

Johnny was silent.

"And what do you expect me to do with you?" asked Gibbs.

Johnny replied that he did not know; but began begging for mercy.

"Suppose I should let you off, what will you

do? Go and tell all about what you have seen here, of course?"

Johnny began to collect his thoughts for a reply.

"Come, answer yes, or no."

"No," replied Johnny. "Certain true if you will let me go."

"If I thought I could trust you I would," said Gibbs, partly to himself.

Johnny had but a faint idea of what was passing in the mind of his captor, who plainly saw that the mildest course would be the best in the end; for harshness would only insure his own danger, unless, indeed, he murdered his prisoner, which he was not prepared to do.

"And you will certainly keep your tongue still, if I do not injure you," said Gibbs.

"Yes, certain true," replied Johnny.

"Then," said Gibbs, "you have nothing to fear; but, if you open your head, or in any other way intimate that you have seen anything wrong here, I will kill you if I have to go to Masonville to do it in the night, when you are asleep."

"I sha'n't say a word," replied Johnny.

"Perhaps you would not," said Gibbs; "but I shall not trust you from here until dark."

Gibbs now proceeded to bind Johnny hand and foot, after which he told his prisoner that if he would keep perfectly quiet until dark he would release him and let him go; but if he attempted to escape, he must expect his vengeance.

"I sha'n't try to get away," said Johnny, who felt more than half assured of his own safety; "but, if some of the folks should find me, I should have to go; 'cause they wouldn't think of leaving me."

"And, therefore," said Gibbs, "if they should search for you, you would shout to them, to come and set you at liberty."

"No," replied Johnny; "for that would be trying to get away; but, if anybody should find me without my speaking, I should go; 'cause I should have to."

It was a long, very long half hour to Johnny and Paul before Gibbs left, with many warnings to Johnny to beware of his conduct.

As Johnny was left bound in such a manner that it seemed impossible for him to free himself, Gibbs left with a feeling of security in which he would not have indulged had he entertained the thought that outside help would be forthcoming. The burglar had been gone some minutes before Paul ventured from his hiding-place, and, motioning to Johnny for silence, listened at the entrance to the cave. He then went out to reconnoitre, and found the coast clear, when he returned to the cave and released Johnny from his uncomfortable situation, and, a few minutes after, the two boys proceeded as noiselessly and rapidly as possible towards Long Pond, which was, perhaps, three-fourths of a mile distant.

They had travelled about a third of the distance, when they came to a cart-path, leading by a somewhat circuitous route over Little River, which emptied into Long Pond. This path Paul at once pronounced too much exposed, as well as too far out of a direct course; and he told Johnny, in a low voice, that they would cross the stream by a small tree which had been cut, trimmed, and placed across the rapid, deep current.

Not daring to leave his friend upon the wrong side of the stream, Paul directed Johnny to cross the river first, and, if he should be discovered, to remove the means of crossing by throwing one end of the log into the water, when he could, perhaps, make his escape and leave him (Paul) to look out for himself. Johnny, however, passed over in safety, concealed himself; and, some three or four minutes after, Paul emerged from the bushes into the little opening, to cross also.

Now, it so happened that Gibbs, after travelling half the distance to Masonville, concluded that the best course for him to pursue was instantly to retrace his steps, release the newsboy, and fly to New York; and, if Johnny was true to his word, he could at any time return and secure his valuable plunder. This course seemed so plainly the best, that he wondered he had not adopted it at once. But, thinking it was not too late to repair the error, he proceeded to retrace his steps, and all the more rapidly as he thought of the possibility of the

prisoner's friends becoming anxious about his long absence, and, while they were searching for the newsboy, they might discover Gibbs himself.

The burglar had crossed Little River at some distance from where the tree was placed for foot-passengers, and he was making his way cautiously along the shore, when he saw Paul just in the act of crossing upon the log.

Johnny was concealed upon the other side; but, as he afterwards expressed it, had both eyes open, and he discovered Gibbs intently watching the motions of Paul.

Thinking the newsboy was still safely bound in the little cave, Gibbs had no intention of molesting Paul, and was simply anxious to remain undiscovered; but Johnny, who supposed that the next instant his old enemy would give chase, shouted an alarm to Paul, who leaped upon the shore, and seized one end of the log to roll it into the water.

"Down with that stick, or I'll shoot you!" shouted Gibbs.

Paul, however, did not hesitate an instant; but, putting forth all his strength, he hurled the end of the log into the stream, and the next instant it was floating slowly down the current, while Paul sprang up the bank to effect his escape; but he had not taken three steps, before the report of Gibbs's pistol echoed through the forest, and Paul threw up his hands and fell upon his face.

CHAPTER XVII.

PAUL AND JOHNNY'S ADVENTURE.

As Gibbs saw Paul fall, he ran rapidly along the shore for some distance, crossed a log bridge, and then as swiftly ran back on the opposite bank of the stream. As he reached the spot where Paul fell, he perceived no one. There was blood upon the spot where Paul had fallen, but no signs of any one near. Gibbs spent some minutes in examining the bushes, thinking Johnny might have assisted his wounded comrade to a place of concealment; but no clue to their whereabouts could be found. Gibbs finally came to the conclusion that the two fugitives had escaped, and would take a circuitous route for Long Pond. Acting upon this idea, he travelled rapidly towards the point where he judged they would strike the pond; but, when he reached that sheet of water, he saw Paul and Johnny sitting quietly upon the shore, waiting for the boat, which was rapidly approaching the spot where they were seated.

"Why did I not kill that brat of a newsboy at once?" said Gibbs to himself, as he beat a hasty retreat lest he might be discovered. "I might

have made way with him, and no one have been the wiser for it. And yet it is said that 'murder will out.' Still I was fool enough to fire when, of all other, times I ought not to. This is a bad scrape, and the sooner I reach New York the better."

"Oh, how I did feel when you fell upon your face!" exclaimed Johnny; "I thought you were shot sure enough."

"If I had not fallen," said Paul, "Gibbs would perhaps have caught us; for he must have stopped some time to see if we were hid anywhere near. It was a providential thought."

"But when I saw the blood, I thought you were shot as sure as the world."

"Yes," continued Paul, "my nose striking the ground was very lucky also. Gibbs must have thought I was wounded. But, Johnny, as God has so mercifully spared our lives, and been so very, *very good* to us, how thankful we ought to be to him!"

"I know it," replied Johnny; "and I have thought, more than a hundred times, if God would only let us escape, I would give my heart to him."

"That is the way we all think," said Paul, "when we are in great trouble; but Uncle Timothy, you know, says it is good to remember our heavenly Father when we are in prosperity; not that we can do God any service, but because it will do us good, and benefit others also. But if we

think of these things as we ought, we can't help loving God; and you know Uncle Timothy says that love is the foundation of all goodness."

"Yes," replied Johnny; "but he says that we must love everybody too. I'm afraid I don't love that rascally Gibbs. Do you think that God loves Gibbs?"

"Certainly," replied Paul. "Doesn't he call upon Gibbs to repent, and believe, and be blessed?"

"Of course he does," said Johnny.

"Well, then," continued Paul, "if God does call upon Gibbs to reform, and enjoy the blessings of the gospel, of course he loves him, or he would not wish to bless him."

"I see! I see!" exclaimed Johnny.

"You know," added Paul, "that God so loved the world, — the wicked, sinful world, — yes, so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son to die for us."

"That is so," said Johnny.

"And if God had hated the wicked world, he would not have given his Son."

"I see, I see it all now!" exclaimed Johnny. "How foolish I was to ask such a question! But I'll ask one more just as foolish, I guess. Suppose Gibbs should die this minute, what would God do with him?"

"He would save him from his wickedness, I should think," replied Paul. "God hates sin so much that he wants everybody to become good."

"That's reasonable," said Johnny.

"But," added Paul, "suppose Gibbs had murdered us both, and he should be sentenced to be hung, and some minister should talk with him, and convert him in prison; when he was hung all the Christians would say that he had gone to heaven, while you, Johnny, who had not made profession of religion, would, if our church creed is true, go to an endless hell. Now I don't call that fair at all. Don't you recollect about the pirates who were hung in Boston? When they were hung, the minister who visited them in prison exclaimed, 'Ascend to heaven; for you have been converted! Ascend from this scaffold!'" *

"I recollect of reading it," replied Johnny.

"Now," continued Paul, "you say that you do not like Gibbs, because he is so wicked; but were he good you would like him."

"Of course I should," exclaimed Johnny.

"Then what you hate is his wickedness," said Paul. "But God hates Gibbs' wickedness a million times more than you possibly could. How, then, could God suffer such wickedness to last forever? I don't believe God will allow Gibbs or anybody else to remain wicked so long. I don't believe God loves sin and wickedness so well as all that comes to."

* The story of the pirates is simply a true narrative of an actual occurrence.

"I see! I see!" exclaimed Johnny. "Why, 'cording to that, some folks say that God loves sin so well, that he's made a place on purpose to make 'em sin, and they can't help themselves."

"That's it exactly," said Paul. "They would shut men up in hell, tell them they shall not repent or do good if they want to; tell them they shall never have a chance to repent or do good, and then punish them because they don't repent and do good."

"That is so!" exclaimed Johnny. "And all I've got to say is, if Gibbs had killed me ten times over, I wouldn't be so awful mean and wicked as to want him to be punished *forever*. I had a good deal rather he would become good. Well, I don't care if he gets to be just as good as Uncle Tim. I guess I should like him tip-top. Fact, I hope everybody will be good some time. You think everybody will be just as good as Uncle Tim, don't you?"

"Yes, I certainly do."

"Well," exclaimed Johnny, "I don't care how good they be in the next world. The better they be, the better I shall like it; and I hope all the wicked folks will grow so good, that — that — well, I hope everybody will be just as good as can be."

"Amen!" responded Paul. "And, Johnny, don't you never say, after this, that you are not a Christian; for if the love of God is not shed abroad

in your heart, then Uncle Timothy isn't a Christian."

Johnny promised to make a public profession of religion at the next conference meeting, which promise he fulfilled to the full satisfaction of the church.

We will pass over the details of the meeting of Paul and Johnny with their friends upon the shore, the recital of their adventures, the ride homeward, the subsequent search of the cave, the recovery of the stolen goods, the arrest of Gibbs in New York city, his trial and condemnation, the offer of a large reward to Paul and Johnny, and the real reward which they finally received. Suffice it to say that an arrangement was made by which Johnny was to sell papers nights and mornings, and attend school, while Paul became the grateful recipient of quite a library of valuable books.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PASTOR'S TRIAL.

The next Sabbath after the adventure of Paul and Johnny, the church was again crowded to hear Mr. White.

This state of things, however, could not last, and a meeting of the church was called to act upon the pastor's manifest departure from the old established creed of the church, and hear his defence in regard to his conduct. As Mr. White arrived at the vestry door, Lucy, who stood in the entry, extended her hand, and said, in a low voice, "Do not falter, or your case is hopeless."

"I will not," replied the pastor, returning the pressure of her hand. "But I have not seen my father, Uncle Timothy, since this meeting was called."

"I have seen him," said Lucy, "and I have also talked with Mr. Gray."

"God bless you, Lucy!"

"Only be cautious, but firm for the truth, Charles, and I doubt not all will be well. You need say but little. Your friends will do enough talking."

"Is your father wholly opposed to me?"

"I fear he is, and so are many others; but God is with you, and your earthly friends will not desert you. I could not, if I would."

Mr. Smith led the opposition, and read the charges, as well as some arguments, from a carefully prepared document. As he finished, Uncle Tim rose, and begged to question the witnesses to see whether the accusers also were not liable to be indicted for heresy.

"Have you, Brother Smith, perfect faith in endless torments?" asked Uncle Tim.

"I think I have," replied Mr. Smith.

"You think you have, but don't know for certain," exclaimed Mr. Cole.

"'Faith,'" said Uncle Tim, "'is the substance of things *hoped for*,' etc.,— not simply believed, but wished, or *hoped for*. Now do you wish, or hope, for endless punishment?"

"I do not consider that a pertinent question," replied Mr. Smith.

"But we do," said Uncle Tim; "and I repeat the question, — do you hope, or wish, for endless punishment for any soul?"

Mr. Smith declined to answer.

"Mr. Smith," said Uncle Tim, "we will not, I promise you, harm a hair of your head. You need not fear to answer plainly. We will still fellowship you, if you will reply manfully and sincerely."

"I am not on trial," replied Mr. Smith, "and I therefore decline to answer. Our preacher is the only one to be tried to-day."

"You are on the stand as a witness," said Uncle Tim, with a warmth rather unusual to him, "and we demand that you answer, as you are bound to do, by all the requirements of the Christian religion, and that you testify to what you believe to be the truth in this matter. Brethren, I sincerely believe that Brother Smith himself in his heart cherishes the same faith with the pastor. Neither of them has the least faith in endless torments. I never had the least particle of faith in it. I once thought I believed it; but in reality I never did. Brother Smith is honest; but he is deceived; for he does not say that he has faith in this awful dogma."

At this point a lady, who had just entered, said she had the most implicit faith in endless punishment.

"'Faith is the substance of things hoped for,'" said Uncle Tim. "Now do you say that you hope for endless torments? Can you say that you really wish, or hope, that Mr. Wilson, who has just died, will be tormented endlessly? My dear sister in Israel, you do not mean any such thing. You cannot pray for the endless punishment of any one, and, if you cannot pray for it, you cannot hope and wish for it."

"I do not think you understand me," replied

the lady. "Of course I neither hope nor wish, much less pray, for the doctrine to be true; but I meant to have said that I believed it."

"Devils also believe and tremble," exclaimed Mr. Cole. "Now, my dear sister, don't you go to reckoning yourself with them."

The lady saw her error, and kept silence.

"It seems," said Mr. Smith, "that we are not to be allowed to proceed with the business of the meeting. If so, I will withdraw."

"My dear brother," replied Uncle Tim, "I am trying to get at the business of the meeting, but am prevented. If our pastor is guilty of heresy, all those who agree with him are also heretics. All heretics in the church must stand or fall together. Certainly that is no more than fair. Now I stand here to prove that, if our pastor is a heretic, nearly all of us are heretics, - and you, Brother Smith, will not be able to prove your innocence."

"I see plainly that no fairness is to be allowed," exclaimed Mr. Smith. "There is, however, another church in Masonville, where heretics are not allowed."

"Then *you* can't join," broke in Mr. Cole.

A smile passed over the faces of the assembly.

"The only difficulty," exclaimed Mr. Gray, "is that Brother Smith, the main witness against our pastor, refuses to testify; for he sees plainly that

he cannot help convicting, not only himself, but every other true Christian in the world."

After considerable more sparring, the pastor, who had been deeply pondering the accusations, said that although his accusers refused to testify, he would answer any reasonable question.

Mr. Smith jumped to his feet, and asked, "Do you really believe that the whole world will be saved?"

Pastor. "I believe that 'God is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.'"

Mr. Smith. "You do not answer my question. Do you believe that God will save all men?"

Pastor. "I have not a doubt but that 'God will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth.'"

Mr. Smith. "Why do you not answer in your own language?"

Pastor. "Because I like the Scriptures so much better than all other forms of speech."

Mr. Smith. "Let the Bible alone, and answer me in plain English."

Pastor. "I cannot leave the Bible, to please my best friends; for it is all I have to support my faith; for vain is the help of man. To the law and to the testimony is the only correct method of trying any doctrine."

"I am surprised to hear Brother Smith trying to discard the Bible," broke in Mr. Cole.

Mr. Smith, seeing his mistake, exclaimed, "I

will take the Bible. Mr. White, do you believe that all wicked men will go to heaven?"

"I do not believe that one wicked man can ever enter heaven."

"I thought," exclaimed Mr. Smith, "that you would not dare to meet that question. So you do not believe that wicked men will be saved?"

"I do believe that wicked men will be saved from all their sins," said the pastor.

"Good!" exclaimed Mr. Cole, rubbing his hands. "Why, Mr. Smith, I heard you trying to prove that wicked men will be saved, and that not a week ago in open conference meeting."

"It is false," replied Mr. Smith.

"Then you do not believe that Ahab Dunn is saved?"

"He," replied Mr. Smith, "was wicked, but was saved from his wickedness, and is now, I trust, in heaven."

"Then you do believe that wicked men will be saved?"

"Of course I do," replied Mr. Smith.

"Then," exclaimed Mr. Cole, "you believe exactly as our pastor does on that point. Go on; you'll both come together."

"Never!" replied Mr. Smith. "Mr. Cole, if you will give me liberty, I will ask how wicked men will be saved; and the reply will show you a vast difference in our beliefs."

"I believe," said the pastor, "that all wicked men will be saved from their sins."

This reply was so unexpected to Mr. Smith that he could hardly proceed; but finally put the question, "In what manner will they be saved from their sins?"

"Through the Lamb of God," replied the pastor; "as it is written, 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!'"

"Not the sin of half the world, or the sins of the saints!" exclaimed Mr. Cole; "but the sin of the world, — the whole world! Amen! So mote it be!"

Mr. Smith saw that he was getting the worst of the discussion; but, with a stern perseverance, he continued, "You say that no wicked men can enter heaven. What will be done with them?"

"I have already told you," replied the pastor, "that they are to be saved from their sins through the Saviour. 'There is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved.'" *

"What need have we of further witness?" exclaimed Mr. Smith. "Behold the heresy, and behold the man!"

"I can only reply, in the language of Paul," said the pastor, — "'I confess that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things written in the law and the prophets.'" †

* Acts iv. 12. † Ib. xxiv. 14.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Smith. "It is all in vain for us to heed the sophistical arguments used by Mr. White and his friends. Die a sinner, and you remain a sinner to all eternity!"

"Do not all die sinners?" asked Uncle Tim.

"Of course they do," replied Mr. Smith.

"Do they remain sinners to all eternity?" asked Uncle Tim.

"I am not on trial," replied Mr. Smith.

"Brethren," said Uncle Tim, "our pastor is on trial for heresy; but thus far no witness against him seems willing to give in his testimony upon the important subject. Even Brother Smith refuses to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in this matter; and I would therefore ask if there *is* really a single witness against our pastor who is willing to testify?"

Mr. Smith. "I will testify to his heresy."

Uncle Tim. "In what does his heresy consist?"

Mr. Smith. "In believing that all will be saved."

Uncle Tim. "Our pastor's heresy, then, consists in having simply a larger faith than the church creed."

Mr. Smith. "He believes that all sin will be destroyed."

"Just what the Bible says!" exclaimed Mr. Cole. "'The way of the ungodly shall perish.'* Not the way of half the ungodly, or half the way

* Ps. i. 6.

of the ungodly; but the way — the whole wicked way of the ungodly shall perish!"

"If I understand Brother Smith correctly," added Uncle Tim, "he believes that the sinful way of the ungodly will last forever."

"I demand a vote on the question," exclaimed Mr. Smith, seeing that he was only injuring his own case. "Shall we dismiss our pastor, or not?"

"Most assuredly not!" said Mr. Cole.

It looked as though the pastor would be sustained two to one; but what was the surprise of Mr. White and his friends to find themselves sustained by only two majority!

"Paul," whispered Johnny, "if you and the other three boys in our class hadn't joined the church, old Smith would have had two majority."

"God be praised!" murmured Paul, partly to himself, "and God bless Uncle Timothy!"

The fact was that Mr. Smith had labored day and night to accomplish the pastor's defeat. Had the whole church supposed that the decision would stand against the pastor, those upon the fence would have voted for his dismissal; but the minister was sustained, and, with the presage of victory, there remained nothing to be done by the members of the opposition, except to submit, or leave the church. A small number signified their intention to withdraw.

CHAPTER XIX.

PAUL'S CHOICE OF A PROFESSION.

PAUL was naturally an apt scholar, and, in spite of his former waywardness, he was well advanced in his studies when he came to reside with Uncle Tim, and since that period, under the direction of his benefactor, he had made good progress. He had become a skilful shoemaker; "but," said the old Christian warrior, "I have set my heart upon having him educated for the ministry, and, if it is his wish, it shall be done."

"Paul," said Uncle Tim, one day, as they were busily at work in the little front shop, "if you could have your choice, what employment would you like to follow?"

Paul looked up inquiringly.

"I mean," continued the old man, "if you could choose just what you would like best."

"I thought I had already settled upon shoemaking," replied Paul, "and I haven't thought of the future without imagining myself still at work at the trade, or carrying on the business upon a very small scale."

"You must choose for yourself," said Uncle

Tim; "but it is best to think seriously of these matters, and, if you do not object, I would like to know the reason for your choice."

"Well," replied Paul, "to tell the truth, one reason is, that, if possible, I might be like one who has for years stood at the head of our church, society, and school. I believe you have no real enemies, and therefore your influence has been greater on the side of good. Had you been rich, or occupied a different position, I have thought that people would not have loved you quite as well. Perhaps they would; but I should not like to have you change. Then I thought if I were to work at shoemaking, I should have a chance to study, as I have ever since I came here, and by and by I might become fitted for something more useful."

"And then you would leave shoemaking?"

"Not exactly," replied Paul. "But I thought I might start a Sabbath school in the next village, and perhaps I might be the means of establishing a church there."

"An excellent idea!" exclaimed the old man. "But remember that it is nearly always popular to teach, everywhere, the glad tidings of a *little joy* which *may be* to a *few people;* but when you commence proclaiming the glad tidings of *great joy*, which *shall be to all people*, that moment you must expect to encounter persecution of some kind."

"And yet it is strange," said Paul.

"It may seem strange," replied Uncle Tim;

"but nothing is really more natural. The Jews persecuted Christ and his followers, fearing that somebody would believe in salvation outside of the Jewish Church. The Catholics persecuted the Protestants because the latter taught that people would be saved outside of the Catholic Church. The Methodists were persecuted by the Calvinists, because the former taught, and held to, a more liberal faith. And in all ages those who espouse the more liberal side have always been persecuted in one form or another; and we, with our enlarged faith, must not expect to escape the general persecution."

"And yet," said Paul, "a member of the other church said to me, only yesterday, that neither Jesus nor Paul could have taught the salvation of all men; for, if they had, the Jews would not have persecuted them."

"And what did you reply?"

"I asked him if the members of his church were not as liberal as the Jews; and he answered that they were a thousand times more liberal. 'Well then,' said I, 'if the bigoted and illiberal Jews would not have persecuted them, how is it that your more liberal church, even in this enlightened age, will annoy us by your petty persecutions? But,' said I, 'if you hate the doctrine that all men will yet be saved from sin, and hate, so very much, the idea of all becoming good and holy, how much more would the Jews hate Jesus

and Paul for teaching that all men would yet become good, like the angels of God in heaven.'"

"And what reply did he make to that?" asked Uncle Tim.

"He made the best reply that I thought it possible for him to make."

"And what was that?"

"Why, he said that he could not stop to answer then, for he was in a great hurry."

"He will, probably, never find time to reply," said Uncle Tim, smiling. "But, to return to the original subject, if you should open a Sabbath school in the next village, they would not be able to support a preacher for some time, and, if you should choose to speak or preach to them, just as you choose to call it, I doubt not it would add greatly to your usefulness. You would have plenty of time to prepare yourself, and, with the advice and assistance of our pastor, you could, in a few years, build up a flourishing church. Perhaps you never thought of preaching"

"I have thought about it," replied Paul; "but I never dared to mention it. I thought perhaps it was foolish for me to even think of such a thing."

"The foolishness of preaching has been the means of saving a great many souls," exclaimed the old man, with a glow of enthusiasm awakened by the idea of Paul yet occupying the very position he so much desired him to fill.

"I know it," said Paul; "but I'm afraid that my preaching would be both foolish and poor. But I have sometimes thought that if I could preach just like Brother White, I should never ask for anything higher."

"Do you mean his style?"

"Oh, no; I mean his faith, — his kind of Christianity. It seems to me that if I could only let everybody know it, they would all believe, and embrace it at once."

"Not all," broke in the old man. "Not one in ten perhaps; for, like the preaching of the early Christians, it is everywhere spoken against. The bare idea of all people becoming good and holy generally meets, at once, with great opposition from all quarters; for it is only after the heart has been filled with love to God and man, that any one can wish or hope for good to all, or have faith in the doctrine."

"Then I must expect opposition all through life," said Paul, thoughtfully.

"Undoubtedly," replied Uncle Tim. "For as long as men hate each other, so long will you meet with persecution. When you can convert all your new neighbors to love all, without exception, then, and not till then, will all persecution cease. Am I discouraging you?"

"Not in the least," exclaimed Paul. "If people love the idea of the endless reign of sin so much, how great must be the need of trying to en-

large their faith! I shall preach the gospel, God helping me, even if I have to work at shoemaking, during the week, to support myself."

"Amen!" broke in the old man. "My dearest wish in regard to you will then be realized. May God bless you, and grant that your labors may be the means of saving many from error and sin! When would you like to commence your preparatory studies?"

"At once."

The same evening an arrangement was formed, by which Paul was to study under the direction of Mr. White, who rejoiced in the hope of having, at some future time, a church of like faith near at hand.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PASTOR'S MARRIAGE.

"LUCY," said Mr. Smith, a few days after the meeting to try the pastor for heresy, "I am deeply pained at the course you have pursued; and I beseech you to leave that heretical people, and, with me, join the new church."

"I am commanded to obey my parents in the Lord," replied Lucy; "but I cannot obey out of the Lord. I shall remain with the old church."

"Can nothing move you?"

"Nothing."

"Tell me how you imbibed this doctrine."

"Our pastor has preached it from the first Sabbath he settled among us; yet no one made the discovery until half the church were converted."

"As I thought," said Mr. Smith. "He has caused all my misfortunes. He sought your hand when I was the richest man in Masonville; but, since my great loss, he absents himself. Had it not been that my whole mind was absorbed in trying to prevent you from becoming his wife, my insurance would not have been neglected. He has crossed my path at every turn. I labored night

and day to out-vote his friends. But he foils me at every step. Uncle Timothy is also with him, heart and hand. I can do nothing more, and must submit to manifest destiny."

"And if you would, dear father, we should be so happy. Dismiss these groundless suspicions from your mind, and you will yet be happier than when you owned the great mill."

"And what do you intend to do, now that the young pastor has ceased his importunities for your hand?"

"He has not ceased. He called last night, while you were at the store, and, among other things, asked me if you could not be induced to consent to our marriage."

"And what did you tell him?"

"I told him," replied Lucy, putting her arms around her father's neck, "that so good a father would not refuse to give his consent to a union that would make us all so happy. Did I not tell the truth?"

"And you will leave me?"

"No, dear father, you shall live with us, and we will make you so happy."

"But he will always dislike me."

"You don't know him. He will be only too happy to have you with us, and will love anything that I love."

"What a dutiful husband he will make!" said

the father, smiling for the first time in many days.

"Yes, and a dutiful son too. When Charles — I mean Brother White — calls to-night, you must tell him that no obstacle stands in the way of our union."

"Have your own way, Lucy; you always did in the end, and always will."

"And tell me that it is your way too."

"Yes, yes, anything. Get married to-morrow if you choose; the sooner the better. Close up this affair as soon as possible, and don't keep myself and the whole parish in an uproar for the next six months with preparations for a wedding. So kiss me once more, Lucy, and I will go to the store."

. . . . .

The next Sabbath, to the surprise of the congregation, Uncle Tim occupied the pulpit, and, upon inquiry, the people learned that the pastor was not in town; but would return in a few days, and prepare to set up house-keeping.

The next day a meeting of the society was held, at which the pastor's salary was increased two hundred dollars; but the most surprising feature was that all the deserters were there, and voted for the extra salary.

CHAPTER XXI.

PAUL COMMENCES PREACHING AT ROCKVILLE.

Some three or four years subsequent to the events recorded in the preceding chapter, Paul, assisted by Uncle Tim and Johnny Cole, opened a Sabbath school in the next village, called Rockville, which boasted of two school-houses and a public hall. The school was held in one of the school-houses for some three months before any other means of proselyting were tried. Paul then commenced preaching to crowded houses; many being drawn to the meetings from curiosity. But when, after a few weeks, the people found that Paul's kind of Christianity required even more sacrifices than other forms, the congregations gradually dwindled down to about fifty persons all told.

Instead, however, of growing discouraged, Paul redoubled his efforts, and, with the advice and assistance of his friends, he slowly increased the attendance, until it was very rare that the house was not well filled; and yet six months rolled away, and nothing like permanency appeared.

"You may preach the best sermons in the world,

Paul," said Uncle Tim, "and yet, if you even *appear* to lack interest, energy, or life, you can never achieve real success. Let the people of Rockville know that you are really in earnest in regard to a lodgment of our faith in their village, and success will crown your efforts."

"Tell me how, and I will do it," said Paul.

"Read 1 Chronicles xxviii. 10."

Paul opened the Bible, and read as follows: "Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary; be strong and do it."

"That's it!" exclaimed the old man. "Do that, and you have really gained a foothold."

"But," replied Paul, "we cannot raise even a thousand dollars for that purpose, and then —"

"Less than a thousand will do," broke in Uncle Tim; "and you can mortgage for the rest. Build a small chapel, and, should your congregation increase to more than the capacity of the building, the fact of such an audience being constantly in attendance, would be a sure guaranty of their ability and willingness to add to the size of the house, and meet all other necessary expenses."

The subscription paper was started, and, by a little help from the friends in Masonville, and a festival, some fifteen hundred dollars were raised, and the little chapel was erected.

"Now," said Uncle Tim, "your personal expenses will be greatly increased, while your income

from your trade has almost ceased, and your people must commence raising, at once, not less than three hundred dollars per year by regular subscription."

"I have been calculating upon about one hundred and fifty," replied Paul.

"How many will subscribe anything?"

"Perhaps fifty."

"And if they pay, upon an average, fifty cents per month, that will make just three hundred a year."

"They will do that without the least difficulty," said Paul.

"Then go forward!" exclaimed Uncle Tim.

The people of Rockville had not been educated to give for religious purposes; but, when they saw how very easy it was to pay a few dollars a year in monthly instalments, they did even better than was anticipated; and when, at the end of the year, Paul found that about four hundred dollars had actually been raised, he gave himself no farther uneasiness in regard to funds, knowing that by judicious management, the subscriptions would, in all probability, constantly increase, and he thanked God and took courage.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE METHODIST PICNIC.

"WHAT a troublesome, good-for-nothing world!" exclaimed Mr. Joseph Brown, a crusty old man who frequently attended meeting in the little chapel where Paul officiated. "Mr. Mason, can you tell me what all the people are going to the grove for?"

"They are going to attend the Methodist picnic," replied Paul.

"Methodist picnic!" exclaimed Mr. Brown, with evident disgust; "Methodist fiddlestick!" And what are they going to do under them old trees?"

"Well, they will eat, and sing, and then there will be good speaking, I presume."

"Can't they speak in their church, and eat in their houses? But where are you going?"

"I thought of attending with the rest," replied Paul, edging off, for fear he might attract listeners as well as be detained too long.

"You going to a Methodist picnic!" exclaimed Mr. Brown in a tone of astonishment. "Look here, Mr. Mason, do *I* want to go to the Methodist

picnic? Did you ever know *me* to go to a Methodist picnic?"

"I think not," replied Paul, still edging away.

"And yet," exclaimed Mr. Brown, "in spite of all this, *you* will go."

Paul knew not what to reply, and, saying he wished to be there in good season, commenced to bid Mr. Brown good-morning. But the old man was not to be got rid of so easily.

"You are not going to take any part," said Mr. Brown.

"Providence permitting, I expect to eat and sing with the rest," replied Paul.

"Look here, Mr. Mason, do I want to eat and sing at a Methodist picnic? Did you ever know me to sing at a Methodist picnic?"

Paul smiled at the bare idea of old Mr. Brown singing anywhere; but he merely replied that he had never known of his singing in such an assemblage.

"And yet, in the face and eyes of all this, you persist in eating and singing at a Methodist picnic. What is the world coming to?"

"I think," replied Paul, smiling, "that the world will yet be saved from all error and sin."

"Then why don't you preach ag'in' the Methodists? Why don't you pitch into 'em?"

"It is not my particular mission to war against any of our sister churches," replied Paul. "I war against some of their doctrines; but with the

Methodist people I shall always endeavor to cultivate the most friendly feelings."

"Look here, Mr. Mason," exclaimed Brown, "do I want to cultivate friendly feelings with the Methodists? Did you ever know me to cultivate friendly feelings with the Methodists?"

"No sir-ree!" broke in a young man who was passing at that moment; "no one ever knew you to cultivate friendly feelings with any one."

Mr. Brown's face assumed a livid hue as he attempted to speak; but his great wrath prevented utterance, and, in the midst of his confusion, Mr. Franklin, who was passing at that moment, took Paul by the arm, and they passed into the grove together.

There was quite a large gathering of children as well as many adults, and all seemed determined upon having a good time. Paul and Mr. Franklin passed through the grove, watching the movements of the children, and the varied preparations for dinner.

"Ah, Jennie! is that you?" exclaimed Mr. Franklin to a young lady, who was busily engaged setting the table. "Fine day we are having. Miss Dexter, allow me to present our pastor, Mr. Mason."

Paul bowed and expressed himself happy to make her acquaintance. The three conversed together for a moment, when Mr. Franklin again took Paul by the arm, and led him away.

"Dare not trust you any longer with Jennie Dexter," said Mr. Franklin, when they were at a safe distance. "She is one of the best, smartest, and prettiest ladies in Rockville; — that is to say, except my wife."

"I have met her many times before," said Paul. "Is she a member of the Methodist church?"

"Yes, she is a Methodist all over, and her mother also. Mrs. Dexter is one of the most bigoted women I ever knew. Her husband, when living, was also a member of the Methodist church; but he was liberal towards all sects, to a fault. Not the least bigotry about him. Jennie Dexter is just like her father, and she renders the Methodist church and Sabbath school valuable aid."

As the two men passed through and through the grove, they encountered Jennie a number of times, and Mr. Franklin noticed that Paul glanced often in her direction. As dinner was announced, Mr. Franklin's eyes twinkled as he seated Paul by the side of Jennie, who blushed to her ears as Mr. Franklin informed her, in his joking way, that he had picked up a beau for her. Paul, in his confusion, could hardly utter a word; but Jennie, seeing his condition, soon set him at rest by her easy manner. Paul ate very little, but drank in all the words that fell from the lips of his fair companion. As soon as Paul had recovered his usual self-possession, he talked freely, while Jennie seemed to catch every word he uttered.

With that true liberality which the author has seen exhibited among many of the Methodist brethren, Paul was invited, by both pastor and superintendent, to address the children and friends. As Paul stepped forward to speak, Mrs. Dexter raised her hands in horror at the sight, and said, loud enough for those near her to hear, "What a pity that such a man should be allowed to utter even a single word!"

"Don't, mother," whispered Jennie. "They tell me that he is one of the best of men, and a most devoted Christian."

"Devoted nonsense!" exclaimed the mother.

Jennie listened attentively to every word of Paul's little speech; but her mother turned away her head, evidently trying to shut out the very sound of his voice. But what seemed most of all to lacerate her religious feelings was, that quite a number of the old men, noted for their piety, gave vent to a number of hearty amens as Paul proceeded in his simple, but earnest and eloquent, speech.

"What a pity that he isn't a Methodist!" said Jennie, as she thought of her idolized father's devotion to the great denomination. "Mr. Franklin," she continued, "he talks almost exactly as father used to. Does he generally talk like that to his own church?"

"Just like that," replied Mr. Franklin, "only more so."

"But what effect does his preaching have? What kind of fruit does your denominational tree produce?"

"I am perfectly willing," replied Mr. Franklin, "to have the members of our church compared with those of any other denomination."

"I grant," said Jennie, "that all your church-members are good, upright men; but certain members of your congregation are, to say the least, very worldly people."

"And what shall we say of some of those who attend your church?" asked Mr. Franklin, smiling.

"Of course," replied Jennie, "we have, among our congregation, some of the worst people in the community. They come to the church, and especially to the conference meetings; but we are not responsible for them. We are to be judged only by our church-members."

"Then judge us also by our church-members," exclaimed Mr. Franklin.

"I never thought of that," said Jennie. "But after this, when I think of your denomination, I will simply take into account your actual church-members."

"Exactly the way!" exclaimed Mr. Franklin. "Brother Mason says that all he asks of any other denomination is to judge us by the same rule they apply to themselves."

"How old is your pastor?"

"Twenty-two," replied Mr. Franklin; "and you, if I mistake not, are about twenty."

"Yes," replied Jennie, changing color. "But why do you ask?"

"Well, nothing particular," replied Mr. Franklin, as he looked up among the tree-tops, with a comical expression; "nothing particular, only I didn't know but what *he* might inquire."

CHAPTER XXIII.

PAUL AND JENNIE DEXTER.

AFTER the speaking was over, Mr. Franklin went home, while Paul, after conversing awhile with the Methodist clergyman, strolled into the woods, and seated himself at the foot of a large tree, where he soon fell asleep.

How long he slept he knew not; but he dreamed that his salary had been raised to six hundred dollars per year, and that he had made love to Jennie Dexter, who returned his affection; but when he applied to her mother for her consent to a marriage, the bigoted old lady commenced laughing at him. Paul awoke and found that instead of Mrs. Dexter it was Jennie and a female companion who were doing the laughing.

"Good-by, Jennie," exclaimed her companion, tripping away towards home.

"Good-by," said Jennie, who turned towards the place where Paul was standing; for he had risen to his feet.

"Where did you spring from?" exclaimed Jennie, catching sight of Paul, — "out of the ground?"

"Not exactly," replied Paul. "I sat down un-

der this tree to look off upon the river and enjoy the cool shade; but in less than ten minutes I was asleep."

"Asleep in these woods! Well, you must have a quiet conscience. My father used to sleep as quietly and calmly as an infant. It mattered not what trouble came, or whatever else might happen, his slumbers were never disturbed, unless, indeed, there was trouble in the church, or coldness among the brethren. Then he would often pace the house till midnight."

"Brother Franklin informs me that he was a very devoted Christian, and of a most liberal spirit."

"Yes," said Jennie, "and he was a whole-souled Methodist too."

"Like his daughter, Mr. Franklin informs me," added Paul.

"I wish I were half as good," replied Jennie. "But I am at least a Methodist, like my father before me. I think, Mr. Mason, that, were you to examine fully our whole system, you would turn Methodist."

"While I, on the contrary," said Paul, smiling, "firmly believe that, were you to fully examine our system of faith, you would think as we do."

"That thought had not occurred to me," replied Jennie, laughing. "And so you think it a very easy matter to make a convert of me, while I, all

the while, was thinking how easily I might win you over to our side."

"Your father used to make a large number of converts, I am told."

"Yes," exclaimed Jennie, with animation, "and his converts never backslid."

"Just like Uncle Timothy!" broke in Paul.

"Uncle Tim and my father were very intimate," said Jennie; "and, although members of different denominations, they talked and acted alike concerning religion. My father, however, was younger. Father used often to attend conference meeting with Uncle Tim, and the old man often came to ours. We all loved to hear him; but, since my father's death, we scarcely see him. I wonder that he can believe as you do, and yet I understand that, during the controversy between Rev. Mr. White and Solomon Smith, Uncle Tim turned the scale in favor of the minister and his new religion. But here we are, at the bank of the river."

"How do you do?" said a young man, seated in a sail-boat. "I was just on the point of sailing up the river. Can carry you both over to the village, if you will get in."

"Thank you!" replied Paul; "and if Miss Dexter is willing, we will take passage in your little vessel."

"I love to sail in a boat dearly," exclaimed Jennie. "I think, Warren, I will accept, if it will not put you to too much trouble."

"No trouble at all," replied Warren. "I was going up the river to pick some pond-lilies on the flats, and, if you love a boat so well, I should like to give you both a long sail, and you will get plenty of pond-lilies besides."

Paul and Jennie thanked Warren, and, a moment after, they were sailing up the river.

"This reminds me," said Paul, thoughtfully, "of the voyage of life. We sail over the river of life, and leave simply a ripple behind, which settles into a calm, and soon no one can tell that our little barque had ever troubled the water. Some men float with the current; others, like Mr. Joseph Brown, swim directly across the stream; while others are always rowing up. There are some who row up, down, or across, as duty may call. I like, however, best of all, not only to row earnestly, but to trim my sail to the point from which the wind came; I would tack right and left, and thus, aided by the very gale that threatens me, I should reach the desired haven sooner, easier, and much surer than by depending upon my own oars. Not that I would stoop to do wrong for the sake of accomplishing good; but I would take all possible advantage of every popular breeze, to advance the truth. I would never compromise with evil; but it has often seemed to me that were we all to adopt a popular policy, or popular way to advance the right, more desirable results might be achieved."

"Then you do think we Methodists are right when we take advantage of the popular gale that always fills the sails of the denominational ship which exhibits life, interest, and zeal?"

"I certainly do," replied Paul. "But what I more particularly have reference to, are instances like the following: We, at one time, held our conference meetings altogether on Tuesday and Thursday evenings; but the popular tide set in for Sunday evening, that is to say, all the young people, as well as a part of the older ones, wanted some place to go to on that evening. We could not get a decent attendance either Tuesday or Thursday evening; but, as soon as we held a conference on Sabbath evenings, our little chapel was well filled; and the result was that even on other evenings our meetings were soon fairly attended. But drop the *popular* Sunday-evening conference, and we could hardly sustain the evening meetings during the rest of the week."

"I see, plainly," exclaimed Jennie, "that you would make a model Methodist, Mr. Mason. I must convert you."

"Miss Dexter," broke in Paul, laughing, "we agree so well I shall soon begin to think it my duty to ask you to become one of us."

"That idea had not entered my mind," said Jennie. "When persons agree with me, I think, at once, they ought to join our church."

"I rather think you *are* a genuine Methodist," said Paul, smiling.

"I *rather* think so myself," replied Jennie. "Warren, are we almost to the pond-lilies?"

"Oh, no, not half way yet," replied Warren; "so talk away."

"Then you are interested,—are you?" said Jennie. "I had no idea you were; but I was trying to convert Mr. Mason to Methodism. I wish I could make everybody Christians, that no one might be lost."

"Lost!" repeated Warren. "Father lost his cow yesterday, but found her again, way down in Masonville. What do you mean by being lost?"

"Well, lost so that God can't find them again. You know the Bible tells us plainly that when any one is lost he cannot be found."

"'Taint so in the Bible," broke in Warren. "Father read to us last night about the sheep that was lost and brought home again, and the prodigal son who was lost and was found."

"That is a new idea to me," said Jennie. "But, then, you know that when a man is *really* lost, he is not one of God's children any more."

"Can't see it," replied Warren. "Father once lost his cow, and 'twas gone more than a month. Well, when he found it in another man's barn, he had to go to law to get it back, and all father had to do was to prove that he had lost that very same cow. Well, just as quick as he proved that, the

justice told the man to let father have the cow; for the fact of his losing that same cow proved that it belonged to father. So when you prove that God has lost any of his children, that proves that they belong to God; and all the devils, and that old thief, Satan, can't rob God of them."

"I hardly think you will convert Warren with your logic," said Paul, laughing.

"I think I shall be obliged to convert you one at a time," replied Jennie. "But, after all, I care very little as to whether you believe that one-half, three-quarters, nine-tenths, or even all of mankind are going to be saved from wickedness. We have some in our church who believe in final salvation for all. But what I want of you both, and all my neighbors, is to become Christian Methodists."

It was after sunset when Paul and Jennie were set ashore with a large number of pond-lilies for themselves and friends. The first person they met, as they emerged into the street, was Mr. Joseph Brown.

"How do you do this fine day, Mr. Brown?" said Jennie.

"Do?" growled the old man. "What can a body do in this troublesome world?"

"Why, Mr. Brown, this is a beautiful, pleasant world," exclaimed Jennie.

"Pleasant fiddlesticks! So, Mr. Mason, you went to the Methodist picnic, — did you?"

"Yes," broke in Jennie, "and he spoke to the children too."

"Spoke to the children!" exclaimed the astonished Brown. "Look here, Mr. Mason, do I want to speak at a Methodist picnic? Did you ever know me to speak at a Methodist picnic?"

"Mr. Mason never accused you of such a thing," broke in Jennie.

"And yet in the face and eyes of all this, you—"

"Good-by," said Jennie, taking Paul's arm, "we are in a great hurry to get home."

Paul bade Jennie good-night at the door.

"Where in the world have you been all this time?" asked the mother, as Jennie entered the house.

"Been sailing upon the river with Rev. Mr. Mason."

"Been what?"

"Sailing with Mr. Mason. Warren carried us up the river, and I have brought home a great bunch of pond-lilies."

"Jennie, you ought not to associate with such a man."

"Why, dear mother, I've been trying all this time to convert him to Methodism."

"You had better keep away from him."

"Oh, no, mother, I shall not give him up yet. I'll make a Methodist of him, if possible."

That night Paul dreamed that he married, that

he and his bride were going to Europe on a wedding tour, and that Warren had agreed to take Jennie and himself over the Atlantic in a sail-boat.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PAUL IN TROUBLE.

It was perhaps a week subsequent to the events recorded in the preceding chapter, that Paul, while on his way to Masonville, saw Jennie who was also going to the village, and as they chatted together pleasantly upon the scenery, events of the day, religious duties, and other topics, the idea entered Paul's mind, more than once, that his companion would make a model pastor's wife; but as he remembered that his salary was only five hundred dollars, he dismissed these thoughts as rapidly as they came.

At the solicitation of Paul, Jennie, in company with him, called upon Uncle Tim. The old man had often dandled Jennie upon his knee when she was yet a child, and when he saw his little pet, as he still called her, enter his shop, he saluted her by a fatherly kiss which was readily returned. During this pleasant greeting, Paul thought his salary ought to be raised at the very earliest possible moment. Jennie intended to stop but a minute, yet nearly an hour flew pleasantly away before she kissed Uncle Tim good-by, and took

her departure, firmly of the opinion that since her father's death there was not another man living so good as the old Christian warrior.

Hardly a day passed for almost a month that Paul and Jennie did not see each other. People began to whisper quite audibly in regard to their intimacy, while Mr. Franklin suggested to Paul, in his joking way, that he considered it his duty to speak with the members of the church in regard to an increase of the pastor's salary, in order that the parish might secure the services of a minister's wife, "who, by the way," he added, "would, of course, be simply our servant."

Paul had been laboring in Rockville four years. His salary was, as we have said, just five hundred dollars. "In a year or two more," thought he, "by prudent economy, I shall probably be enabled to support a wife. I shall never be able to find another equal to Jennie Dexter." [A very natural thought for a young lover.] "If she loves me, she will not consider it too great a sacrifice to wait even two or three years for me."

The course that he thought to pursue was now fairly settled in Paul's mind.

It was not over five minutes after arriving at this conclusion, as he was passing along the main street of Rockville, that he saw Jennie, upon the sidewalk, just ahead of him. Paul had previously felt tolerably easy in her presence; but on this occasion his heart was all of a flutter. One instant

he thought he would hasten to her side; and the next moment, that he would avoid her by turning back. It seemed to him as though his right foot was exceedingly anxious to overtake her, while the left pedal was holding back with might and main. In a fit of desperation, however, he stepped to her side, and passed the usual compliments of the day.

As they walked on Paul said but little, and he imagined that his companion was rather cool.

Paul fell into a kind of revery, from which he was awakened by the voice of Jennie, who invited him to enter her mother's dwelling. Paul looked up, and found that, in his absence of mind, instead of leaving Jennie at the gate, he had entered the yard, and now stood at the door, which Jennie had opened. Seeing the predicament in which he was placed, Paul became more embarrassed than ever, and, declining the invitation, under plea of a prior engagement, he handed her his hat, and was about to turn away, when Jennie smilingly inquired if he intended to leave his hat as a keepsake.

Paul looked at Jennie, and then at the hat, and, as the extreme ludicrousness of his situation forced itself upon his mind, he burst into a hearty laugh, which set him perfectly at ease.

"Miss Dexter," said Paul, "I think I will take my hat, unless you prefer to retain it."

As Jennie passed into the house, she began

seriously to reflect upon the relations existing between herself and Paul. The cause of his frequent interviews with her, and more especially his recent extreme embarrassment, she conjectured must proceed from his feelings towards herself.

"Was that Mr. Mason at the door?" asked Mrs. Dexter.

"Yes, mother."

"I really wish that you would avoid that man."

"Why, mother!" exclaimed Jennie, "how can you talk so?"

"He is an unbeliever of the most dangerous character."

"We must try to convert him then."

"He is a bad man."

"Then we must try to make him good."

"He is steeped in sin."

"Then I will endeavor to become the instrument to save him from his sins."

"But I am really afraid to have you in his company. I shall feel it my duty to speak with our new pastor about it, if you do not avoid him."

"I hardly think our new pastor, who has only been with us a week, will think it his duty to meddle with such an affair, and more especially when he learns that our former pastor, who has but just left us, held Mr. Mason in the highest esteem for both his moral integrity and true Christian character."

"I cannot bear the sight of him," exclaimed

Mrs. Dexter, "and you must, at least, cease to invite him to make special calls at our house."

"I will, if you really wish it," said Jennie; "but if you only knew his true goodness, his tender heart, his constant efforts to increase the happiness of others, his kind sympathies and, above all, what a truly noble Christian he really is, you could no more help respecting and loving him than the sun can help shining in a clear sky. He is the very image and likeness of Uncle Tim. You know how father loved that good old Christian warrior, as he used to call him. And that same Christian warrior has been, for the past ten years, directing the labors of his foster-son; and Mr. Mason never does anything of any particular moment without first consulting Uncle Tim, and obtaining his approval."

"Why, Jennie, you are bewitched!" exclaimed the mother.

"No, dear mother, not bewitched," replied Jennie; "but I speak the words of truth and soberness; and the time will, I feel confident, soon come when the clouds of prejudice will roll away and you can then see clearly how truly good he is."

"Well, well," said Mrs. Dexter, thoughtfully, "I may be mistaken, and I will say nothing more of his character, good or bad, until I really know him."

"That is just like yourself, dear mother," said

Jennie, "and from this time I am sure that you will never have occasion to speak of him otherwise than in his praise."

Paul used frequently to study and write in the anteroom of the chapel, where he had access to the teachers' library; but he still made it his home with Uncle Tim. He sometimes, however, remained all night in Rockville, that he might the better perform his pastoral labors.

A few days after the events just narrated, as Paul was seated in the chapel anteroom, he saw Jennie pass in company with the new Methodist clergyman. The new pastor was both young and prepossessing in his personal appearance, and, as Paul imagined, a very pleasing companion. Paul was not exactly jealous; but he thought to himself that Jennie was not yet his own.

Paul saw Jennie but twice during the next fortnight, and, on both occasions, she was with the pastor of the Methodist church. To Paul, affairs assumed a serious aspect. During the long period of two weeks he had not even had an opportunity to speak with Jennie, while the young Methodist clergyman had undoubtedly been with her nearly every day. Paul grew nervous, and, in a fit of desperation, he walked over to the house of Mrs. Dexter in the evening. He was about to knock, when, hearing Jennie's voice, he naturally stopped, and, the next instant, the voice of the young min-

ister fell upon his ear, and he turned from the door with his nervousness not at all improved.

Next day, after dinner, Paul again started for the same place; but, as he arrived in sight of the house, he saw the new pastor just entering the gate.

The next day Paul was exceedingly busy; but, the day after, he knocked at the door of Mrs. Dexter's residence. The mother came to the door. Paul inquired for Jennie, and was informed that she had gone with *her* pastor to call upon a widow lady. That night Paul hardly closed his eyes in sleep.

CHAPTER XXV.

REV. MR. GOODWIN.

THE next day, as Paul sat in the anteroom of the chapel, he heard a knock at the door, and, rising, he ushered in Mr. Franklin, whose pleasant countenance wore even more than its usual happy expression.

"Brother Mason, are you well?" asked Mr. Franklin, after the first salutations were over.

Paul replied that he did not sleep well the preceding night.

Mr. Franklin assumed one of his comical expressions, as he exclaimed, "Look here, Brother Mason, do *I* wish to lay awake nights? Did you ever know *me* to lay awake nights? How I wish our fussy Mr. Brown was here to help me argue this question!"

Paul laughed as he remarked, that, from outward appearance he judged Mr. Franklin enjoyed the best of nightly slumbers.

"And yet," exclaimed Mr. Franklin, "in the face of all this, *you* still persist in laying awake nights. Oh, if Mr. Brown was only present, how he would pour out overpowering logic into your

benighted intellect! There, now, you look better already. But if I can cause your face to brighten, what must be the glorious results of the logical mind of our mutual friend, Joseph Brown! I think I must call in his aid."

"Please excuse me," cried Paul, "for my punishment would be greater than I could bear."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Franklin, with mock surprise, "can you speak so disparagingly of the abilities of one who has attended our meetings for almost three months?"

"Never mind, Brother Franklin," replied Paul; "he will side with the other church next quarter, and then you will be under the dire necessity of borrowing all your fine logic from another denomination."

"Well, well," said Mr. Franklin, "I suppose we shall soon lose Mr. Brown's valuable moral support; but what I most regret is, that we shall also lose his subscription of five dollars, of which he has never yet paid one penny, and never intends to. But, leaving Mr. Brown, let us return to the original subject; and, being some ten years your senior, I venture my advice freely. Nothing is so conducive to quiet slumbers as married life. Ten years ago I used to be as restless as a nest of hornets. Well, I just run my eye, carefully, all over Rockville, picked out the best girl in the place, made love to her, was accepted, and here I am, enjoying life hugely, and always calm as a

May morning. Think I must take you to board a few weeks, while my wife points out to you a plain path of duty in this matter. Get the right kind of a wife, and we can afford you a larger salary. Now, for example: there is, — well, never mind, — there goes, as fine a young lady as our whole country affords, — that is, barring my wife."

Paul glanced out of the window, and caught a glimpse of Jennie Dexter, who was at that moment passing by. Paul colored to the tips of his ears.

"'Faint heart never won fair lady,'" said Mr. Franklin, with another comical look. "Never mind the obstacles. If your own sterling worth does not carry the day, I'll — well, Brother Mason, I must bid you a kind good-day."

Mr. Franklin had scarcely left the building, when another knock was heard, and, opening the door, Paul ushered in a bustling kind of a man, who announced himself as the Rev. Mr. Goodwin, of New Town.

"I read a brief account of your ordination," said the visitor, "and, this being the period of my usual summer vacation of two weeks, I have embraced the opportunity of calling upon some of our Liberal preachers. I am the only Liberal preacher near Rockville, with the exception of Rev. Charles White. But the world moves, and I doubt not the land will be flooded with preachers of Liberal Christianity. Liberal ideas must prevail, — opinions up to the times in which we live. It is a

golden age, sir; the whole civilized world is awake, and the onward march of Liberal Christianity cannot be stayed. The world moves! The world moves, sir!"

Paul listened attentively; but, not understanding the drift of Mr. Goodwin's lofty harangue, he wisely kept silence.

After conversing with Paul for some half hour or more, Mr. Goodwin offered to supply his pulpit for the next Sabbath; but the young pastor's suspicions had been somewhat excited during the conversation, and he replied that he had no objection to having his pulpit supplied by any minister with whom he would exchange, or whom he would fellowship; "and," continued Paul, "I will exchange with or fellowship any one who accepts the Bible as an inspired Book. We may honestly differ in regard to many of its doctrines; but no one can justly claim to be a Christian who rejects the Bible, and, of course, with it, the only reliable account of our Divine Master, whom we profess to follow by assuming the name of Christian."

"But," exclaimed Mr. Goodwin, "people may honestly differ as to the truth of Christ's resurrection, the reality of the pretended miracles, and the inspiration of the Bible."

"True," replied Paul. "I met a gentleman, about a year ago, who told me plainly that he discarded the Bible, said he was an Infidel; yet I could grasp the brother by the hand as an honest

man, but not as a Christian. I loved the man for his honesty; but I could not admit such a man into this church."

"Then you do not consider a man who denies the inspiration of the Bible, Christ's resurrection, and the recorded miracles, a Christian?"

"No! emphatically no!" replied Paul. "If such a man should present himself to me for advice, I would say to him, If you are a preacher, leave the pulpit at once; in fact, you cannot do so too soon."

"That is plain language."

"Yes," replied Paul, "and I would be still more plain. I would say, my dear brother, first of all, do not sail under false colors. Secondly, as you reject the Bible, throw it aside, and cease to teach what you call the truth from a book which you believe to be filled with the most glaring falsehoods. Thirdly, as you do not even pretend to believe in the Christ of the Bible, do not any longer assume a name by which you signify to the world that you are a follower of him whom you reject. Fourthly, as you reject the Bible and the Saviour, be at least as honest as the Pharisees, and denounce the Christian religion, and let the world know that Jesus was an impostor. But should you ever wish to enter the Christian fold, enter through Christ, the door, and do not attempt to climb up some other way; for the same is a thief and a robber."

"Sir," broke in Mr. Goodwin, "do you call us thieves and robbers?"

"My language," replied Paul, "cannot easily be misunderstood."

"Do you mean to insinuate," exclaimed Mr. Goodwin, excitedly, "that I am sailing under false colors?"

"I never insinuate on such subjects," replied Paul, calmly; "but I would say plainly, that the man who rejects Christ, and yet assumes his name, is false to his profession."

"I can see clearly," said Mr. Goodwin, sarcastically, "that I have been deceived. I really thought you were the teacher of an enlarged faith."

"What faith," exclaimed Paul, with animation, "can be larger than faith in Jesus as the Saviour of the '*whole world?*' I have always rejected the theory of Christ as *half a Savior*, or Saviour of half the world; *how much more emphatically, then, ought I to reject that miscalled Radical Christianity which boldly rejects Christ as the Saviour of one single individual!*"

"Why!" broke in Mr. Goodwin, "you war upon us even more than you combat orthodox bigotry."

"You are correct," replied Paul; "for even orthodox bigots accept Christ as the Saviour of a part of mankind; but, if I understand you aright, you do not accept Jesus even as a partial Saviour."

"I imagined," said Mr. Goodwin, "that your

great aim was to war against, and break down, orthodox bigotry."

"You are mistaken," replied Paul. "Our chief object is to preach Jesus to the people, and to enlarge their faith in him. True, we combat error, as I trust you have already learned; yet our mission is not to tear down, but to build up. With Christ for our foundation Rock, on which to erect our Christian edifice, we shall raise our fortress towards heaven, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it."

"Amen! and amen!" responded the well-known voice of Uncle Tim, who entered at that moment.

Mr. Goodwin did not preach at Rockville.

CHAPTER XXVI.

PAUL AND JENNIE'S ADVENTURE ON THE RIVER.

ANOTHER month rolled away. Paul met Jennie Dexter occasionally, but not to converse with her for any length of time. It was settled, in his own mind, that Jennie would become the wife of the young Methodist minister, and Paul did not, therefore, care to even pay her a friendly visit.

Paul vainly imagined that he had become nearly reconciled to this inevitable result, when, as he was conversing with Mrs. Franklin, during a morning call, the latter said, "I understand that the Methodist minister is going to be married in a few weeks, and perhaps in a few days. This morning I saw him, in company with Jennie Dexter and her mother, enter the cottage which he has hired, and which is being repaired for the reception of his bride. I have also heard that—"

Paul could stand it no longer, and, seizing his hat, he walked out of the house before the speaker could finish her sentence.

"I wonder what in the world the matter is with our pastor," thought Mrs. Franklin, as she witnessed his sudden departure. "He acts like a

crazy man. He ought to get married, and have a nice little wife to take care of him."

Paul had hardly emerged into the street before he caught sight of Jennie just ahead of him. He was on the point of turning into a by-street, when Jennie looked back, and, seeing Paul, stopped, evidently waiting for him to overtake her. He could not turn back, and therefore went forward, or, as he afterwards expressed it, "was led like a lamb to the slaughter."

"Why, Mr. Mason!" exclaimed Jennie, "you are one of the greatest of strangers. It really seems an age since I saw you. You are not looking well. You have perhaps been sick, and therefore have not been abroad for a few days past. Have you been very sick?"

Paul replied that he had enjoyed his usual good health.

"Ah, I see how it is," exclaimed Jennie; "you have labored too hard of late. We Methodists have taken advantage of the stagnation in business, and, while the people are idle, we are holding protracted meetings. Our church and vestry are thronged, and I trust that God has truly blessed us."

"I am glad to hear it," said Paul.

"And now I suppose that you are also taking advantage of these same circumstances, and are having one of your calmer revivals among yourselves. I trust this is so, and that your church

will likewise receive its share of the blessing. I doubt not that you are laboring harder than your health will permit without injury. Now we Methodists get up a revival, and all the members of the church share in the labor. We enjoy it. There is nothing like a working Methodist for a revival."

"I really wish," said Paul, "that our people might catch a little of the fire from off the altar of Methodism; for if there is one thing I dislike to see more than all others, it is, to use a very expressive term, a cold-blooded Christian. Some people think the Methodists get too warm; but, as for myself, I pray God to kindle anew the fire in all our hearts, and I am never fearful of its burning too brightly. I never yet objected to the zeal of your great and powerful denomination."

"You simply object to what you would term our imaginary hell-fire," said Jennie.

"That is about all," replied Paul.

"Then," exclaimed Jennie, "why not join with us, and with many others of our church, purge our denomination in Rockville of that kind of exhortation that even father used to say never accomplished the least good? and then, with the fiery zeal of our church, we will build up such a glorious Methodist Zion in Rockville, as shall be the wonder and admiration of angels. I have always been taught to believe that the Bible was opposed to your faith; but I have seen enough of the effects

of what might be termed 'Elder Knapp preaching,' to know that it is evil, only evil, and that continually. What we want more of is the spirit of John Wesley, which, to a great extent, still pervades our church."

"Miss Dexter," said Paul, "I, too, love that warmth which you extol, and I would have, therefore, others, whose hearts are aglow with love for the gospel, unite with our church, and build up a Zion that shall glorify God and the Saviour."

"Always the same reply to my most earnest appeals," exclaimed Jennie, smiling. "I do believe that you are even firmer in your faith than I am in Methodism. Are you really so set in your way?"

"I think I have God on my side, and, until I think otherwise, I can never be moved."

"Here we are at the grove," said Jennie. "That was a very pleasant day, to me, on which we held our picnic here."

"That day was also one of the bright spots in my pathway," added Paul.

Paul expressed his desire to enter the grove, and invited Jennie to accompany him, which invitation, much to his surprise, she readily accepted, and they wandered around its beautiful walks, stopping occasionally beneath the shade of some tree to enjoy the scenery, or look out upon the river upon whose bosom, far up the stream, they could discern Warren in his little sail-boat.

Paul's conscience smote him more than once, as he thought how soon his companion was to become the wife of another. "I ought not to remain with her one moment longer," thought Paul to himself. "It really seems like a crime. But this walk shall be my last with her, and then I will devote myself wholly to the cause of my Master, and Rockville at least shall be converted to the faith which I cherish. I will labor night and day. I will strengthen the weak, make stronger the firm, make proselytes of all who are open to conviction, destroy my enemies by causing them to love and respect my goodness and piety, and annihilate all the opposers of universal salvation from sin by making them friends of the faith which they now oppose. I will begin to-day. Yes, this very day will I commence by consecrating myself anew to the great and glorious work before me. I will bid my companion adieu, and hasten where duty calls me."

"I used to think," said Jennie, "that, when your people referred to universal salvation, they meant saved *in* sin, and that simple idea has, perhaps, frightened thousands from your ranks; but I notice that, whenever you speak of salvation, you nearly always give a clear idea of your meaning by saying salvation *from* sin, and thus you at once disarm all cavillers. But I would like to ask what is to become of the drunkard, who, the Bible informs us, cannot inherit the kingdom of God?"

"Well," replied Paul, "to make a personal application, there is Mr. Aldrich, a member of your church, who used to be a notorious sot. Now do you ask what is to become of him, because he was once a drunkard?"

"Oh, no; for he is not a drunkard now. I mean simply those who *die* drunkards."

"But," replied Paul, "the Bible makes no such distinctions. The Bible says, '*no drunkard;*' and Mr. Aldrich was *once* included in that condemnation."

"Of course," said Jennie, "Mr. Aldrich could not inherit the kingdom *while* a drunkard; but he is no longer a drunkard, and therefore the passage, which once referred to him, no longer applies to his case."

"Precisely so," added Paul, "and, when other drunkards cease from strong drink, they will stand upon the same footing with Mr. Aldrich."

"Certainly," replied Jennie. "But some die drunkards."

"Are they drunkards in the next life?"

"Of course not."

"Well then," said Paul, "as they have ceased to be drunkards, and as the passage, therefore, no longer applies to them, they are in the same condition of Mr. Aldrich."

"I see it clearly."

"But," continued Paul, "we are told in that same fifth chapter of Galatians that not one

single one who indulges in hatred or wrath can inherit the kingdom of God."

"You are correct," said Jennie. "I wonder what is to become of some of our good Christians whom I have seen get angry. They are all classed with the drunkard. Why, some of our best Christians sometimes get angry. What will become of them, and how shall we ever get to heaven?"

"Through Jesus," replied Paul, "who will yet save them from all their sins."

"But is there any change after death?" asked Jennie.

"Well," said Paul, "you are a sinner."

"Yes."

"All your friends are sinners."

"Yes, church-members and all."

"And you will all die sinners."

"Most certainly we shall."

"And, if there is no change after death, you will remain sinners to all eternity."

"I see it clearly," said Jennie. "No change after death savors strongly of endless universal damnation. That is a new idea to me. There must be a change after death."

"Certainly," replied Paul. "Furthermore, there is no middle ground. To be consistent, we must either accept the doctrine of universal damnation, or universal salvation. The time will come when you and all others will be

compelled to abandon your position upon the fence, and stand either on the one side or the other."

At this moment Warren's boat grated upon the shore about a rod from where they stood.

"I should like to give you a good sail," said Warren, addressing Paul and Jennie; "but I must hurry home. If you can sail a boat, Mr. Mason, you are welcome to mine."

"I think I understand all about sail-boats," replied Paul. "I used to own one when very young, and I will put myself under obligations to you by accepting your generous offer, and giving Miss Dexter a sail across the river, if no more."

"I love to sail, dearly," exclaimed Jennie.

"Be careful of the little mast," said Warren. "It is apt to slip out of the lower socket. There is no danger; but you might break the upper socket, and then you would have to row ashore."

"Mr. Mason and I will keep a sharp lookout," replied Jennie, as Paul assisted her into the little vessel.

"I ought not to have uttered a word in regard to my knowledge of a sail-boat," said Paul to himself. "Why do I run into the very jaws of danger? Five minutes ago I had firmly resolved to leave her at once, and yet here I am, still treading upon forbidden ground."

They sailed up the river a short distance,

and then the boat was headed down the stream. As they neared the bridge, Jennie caught sight of her mother, who was, at that moment, passing over. Mrs. Dexter stopped as she saw the couple in the boat, and as Jennie pointed out her mother, Paul steered the little vessel to where she was standing.

As they arrived at the bridge, Paul caught hold of one of the piers, and held the boat from drifting. Jennie rose near the bow of the boat to speak to her mother, when the latter bade her be very careful.

"There is no danger," replied Jennie, taking hold of the little mast for support.

"Let go of the mast! Down quick!" exclaimed Paul.

But his warning came too late; for he had hardly uttered the words ere the mast slipped from its socket, the upper board which held it to its place was torn asunder, and, before Paul could reach the place where Jennie had stood, she was in the water entangled in the sail and mast. Mrs. Dexter shrieked in mortal fear and agony.

"Cling to the mast!" shouted Paul.

Jennie attempted to follow his directions; but simply clutched the sail, and was sinking, when Paul leaped into the water, and grasped her by the arm.

"Save her! save her!" cried the almost distracted mother.

"I will!" shouted Paul. "We are safe!"

As he uttered the last word, he grasped the side of the boat; but he had not calculated upon the extreme lightness of the little vessel; for, the instant his hand rested upon the boat, it tipped, and the next moment both Paul and Jennie disappeared beneath the surface of the water.

"O God, they are drowned!" cried Mrs. Dexter, wringing her hands.

Quite a number of people had collected upon the bridge; but no one seemed willing to risk his life in response to the agonizing appeals of the mother. There were quite a number of church-members looking over the railing, and doubtless praying that something might be done, while others, gazing upon the terrible scene, were anxiously thinking that some one ought to volunteer to risk his life in an attempt to rescue the drowning couple.

Paul struggled manfully to save his companion by endeavoring to keep her head above water; but there was nothing to cling to; for the boat, mast, and sail were rapidly leaving the spot. Paul had not thought of abandoning his companion, and the fate of both seemed certain, when a man who had just arrived, gave one look over the railing, and, uttering an oath, leaped in.

"Save yourself, and I'll take care of the gal!" he exclaimed to Paul; but the latter still buffeted the waters with his right arm, while the left sup-

ported the form of Jennie, and, aided by the two, she was soon in the arms of her mother.

Bill Saunders, who so gallantly came to the rescue, after swearing a few times at some of the church-members for their cowardice, turned to go home, when Paul began to express his deep gratitude for his bravery and generous assistance.

"You're a brick," replied Bill. "I aint been inside of a meetin'-house in nigh on to ten years; but I'll come to hear you preach next Sunday if it kills every cow in the barn."

"Three cheers for Bill Saunders!" shouted a little barefooted boy.

"The cheers were given with a will. The low, despised, good-for-nothing Bill Saunders, as he was called, had suddenly grown into a hero. He was once more looked upon as a man.

There are some events and circumstances that seem to put us all upon one common level, when all bigotry, prejudice, and pride are laid aside for the time being, and each one feels that his neighbor is also, like himself, a member of God's great family on earth. The present was one of those periods. Mrs. Dexter forgot her bigotry and sectarian prejudices, and, seizing the hand of not only Paul, but that of God-forsaken Bill Saunders, she poured forth her thanks from a truly grateful heart.

Jennie had swallowed considerable water, and

was very weak, and was obliged to be carried home.

Mrs. Dexter urged both Paul and Bill Saunders to remain at her house until the arrival of the physician; but Bill declined, and went away. Paul, however, stayed. The doctor came soon after, and ordered the usual remedies.

Jennie had spoken but once or twice, in a faint voice, since being taken from the water. The physician, however, assured them that there was no danger.

"Had not your pastor better be informed of the accident at once?" suggested Paul, knowing the great interest he must take in anything relating to the welfare of Jennie.

"I think we will defer it until he returns," replied Mrs. Dexter.

In about an hour Jennie was able to speak, and, although her voice was still very weak, she poured forth her expressions of gratitude to Paul, as she pressed his hand, which she held in her own.

But, at the suggestion of the doctor, Paul departed, and Jennie, soon after, fell into a quiet slumber.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WARREN'S ADVENTURE.

PAUL had proceeded about half way to Masonville, when he met Uncle Tim in a carriage, driving towards Rockville. When the old man caught sight of Paul, he exclaimed, "Thank God, he is safe! God be praised!"

He attempted to alight from the vehicle; but he was utterly unable to do so, and sank back upon the seat, entirely overcome by the wholly unlooked-for appearance of his foster-son.

The news of Paul's adventure had spread like wildfire; but, added to the real facts were a large number of rumors, and, by the time the intelligence reached Uncle Tim, Paul had broken one leg, his right arm was literally shattered in pieces, and he had been so long immersed in water, that he was as good as drowned; at least, he could not, under the most favorable circumstances, survive until sunset.

Upon hearing the sad tidings, Uncle Tim seized his hat, and rushed out of the shop. Emerging into the street, he chanced to see Mr. Gray's horse

and carriage, and, without a word, jumped in, and drove rapidly towards Rockville.

Now it chanced to be a time when horse-thieves had been doing considerable business in their line, in different parts of the adjacent country, and when Mr. Gray looked out, just in time to catch a glimpse of the carriage as it was disappearing round a distant curve in the street, he instantly shouted, "Horse-thief!" which cry was taken up by the crowd, and borne onward until the sound fell upon the ears of a young, active, little deputy-sheriff, who instantly set off in hot pursuit, fully determined that one horse-thief should suffer for his rascality, not doubting that the large reward which had been offered for the detection of the thief or thieves would most assuredly flow into his pocket like a river.

The young deputy had proceeded some half mile, when he saw the stolen team with Warren seated inside; he having volunteered to take it to Masonville, leaving Uncle Tim to go back to Rockville with Paul.

"How easy it is to tell a villain!" said the deputy to himself, as he eyed Warren sharply. "That fellow has about the hardest-looking face I've seen for many a day. He thinks to elude pursuit by coming back, and turning off at the next road which leads to Boston. But these rogues don't fool me. That reward is mine as sure as the sun shines. Let me cock my pistol

before I head him off, and if he attempts to draw on me, I'll shoot him like a dog as he is. He has no weapon in his hands. Good! all right! Here he is almost up to me. Now is my time."

The young deputy sprang forward, seized the horse by the bridle, and, presenting his pistol, ordered Warren to alight *instanter*.

Warren was no coward; but, eying the pistol, he alighted, and offered his purse, containing seventy-five cents, to the bold highwayman.

"No you don't!" exclaimed the deputy. "You can't pull the wool over my eyes in that manner. I know you, you rascal! Put your hands behind you instantly while I tie them."

Warren begged hard for mercy, all the while keeping his eye upon the pistol; but the deputy was inexorable, and in a few minutes Warren was securely bound and forced into the carriage, and the deputy, in triumph, drove his valuable prisoner towards Masonville, chuckling to himself that not less than a cool hundred dollars had been made in less than an hour.

The deputy occasionally looked at the hardened-looking wretch at his side; but seeing no disposition to escape, and being now within the outskirts of Masonville, he became less and less watchful of his prisoner.

The captive, however, was not disposed to submit without a struggle, and, working silently at the handkerchief that bound his hands, he soon

slipped one of them out, and while the deputy's eyes were turned in another direction, Warren dealt him such a blow just back of the ear, that he dropped into the bottom of the carriage, and the next instant the deputy's pistol was pointed at his own head.

But the deputy, as well as Warren, was a man of undoubted courage, and, by a dexterous movement he knocked the weapon from Warren's hands into the road, and putting forth his whole strength, he grappled his antagonist in what both imagined to be a struggle, not only for victory, but for life itself.

By this time the usually gentle horse had become frightened, and set off at a fearful rate through the principal street of Masonville.

"Robbers!" shouted Warren.

"Horse-thief!" cried the deputy.

The two passengers might have inflicted upon each other considerable bodily injury; but the jolting of the vehicle very fortunately threw them so often from one spot to another, that no particular physical damage was received by either.

Now it so happened that Mr. Gray had already heard that it was Uncle Tim who rode off with his team, and he was waiting patiently for its return. Hearing a great commotion in the street, he rushed out, and saw his horse upon a keen run, coming towards him, and, catching a glimpse of

some one in the carriage, he doubted not that Uncle Tim had fallen from his seat.

Thoroughly frightened, Mr. Gray took his station in the middle of the street, and shouted for help to stop the horse as he arrived opposite Mr. Smith's store. As soon, however, as the animal saw his master, he slackened his speed, and, trotting rather proudly to the place where Mr. Gray stood, stopped.

"I've got you, you robber!" shouted Warren, who had the deputy by the throat.

"You can't get away, old horse-thief!" cried the spunky little deputy, whose hand was firmly lodged in the abundance of Warren's flowing locks.

Mr. Gray stepped to the side of the carriage and looked in. He recognized Warren in an instant, and, taking in the whole state of the case at a glance, he burst into a roar of uncontrollable laughter. The matter was soon explained. One or two of the bystanders attempted to get up a laugh at the expense of the deputy; but they were instantly silenced by Warren, who gave it as his opinion, that the little deputy was the spunkiest, smartest, and toughest man of his size in the State. "He did fight like a hero," continued Warren. "When I presented that pistol he didn't quake a bit."

"Well," said the deputy, "I'll say this much: You are the very toughest prisoner I ever under-

took to secure. I only regret that you are not one of those confounded horse-thieves."

"Much obliged for your kind wish," replied Warren, winking at the crowd.

After Uncle Tim had become thoroughly composed, he informed Paul that he had, that afternoon, nearly completed a bargain by which he was to exchange his little house in Masonville, for a cottage and an acre of land about half a mile from the Rockville chapel.

The new parsonage, in which Mr. White resided, was nearly half a mile from the centre of Masonville, in the direction of Rockville, and about a quarter of a mile from the church. The cottage which Uncle Tim referred to was situated about half a mile from the chapel, in the direction of the parsonage. This would bring the two pastors within twenty minutes' walk of each other.

Uncle Tim and Paul examined the cottage, which was painted white, with green blinds, and, although not large, was quite a desirable dwelling, and attached to the house was about an acre of good land, a part of which was covered with fruit-trees, whose yield, added to the garden produce, would prove very serviceable, and quite an addition to his income.

Real estate in Masonville had, within a few years, risen rapidly, and the lot upon which Uncle Tim's little, old-fashioned house stood had become very valuable, being situated upon the most

important business street in the very centre of the village.

Paul, as well as Uncle Tim, at once perceived the great mutual advantage of such an exchange of property, and that night the bargain was completed, and the requisite documents ordered to be drawn up ready for signature.

"And now," said Uncle Tim, "I realize, more than ever, that all things are working together for good. In a week we shall be located in this cottage. I shall be obliged to leave the work-bench more and more in future; not that I am growing old, for I feel young at seventy; but I must devote a part of my time to the oversight of the large property left in my care by Mr. Wilson. The pay which I receive for this labor will afford me ample income for my own maintenance, and what I receive from other sources can be appropriated to the support of the gospel which lies so near my heart. And, my dear son, I shall be near you. I feel your absence even when you are away but one night. By and by you will probably be married, and then you will have a house and large garden, free of rent, and ready to receive you."

Paul's face fell perceptibly as Uncle Tim spoke of marriage; but he continued the conversation as pleasantly as though his heart was as light as ever.

"I have just received a letter from Johnny Cole," continued the old man. "He sent me a

draft for five hundred dollars to be put in the savings bank for him. Here is, also, a letter for you. He has done tolerably well in California; but he will be at home in a short time, and set up a book and periodical store. He also sent one hundred dollars for Brother White, as his share of maintaining the gospel in Masonville."

"And here is another hundred for the cause in Rockville," said Paul, "or rather to be paid to me as pastor. He says he shall soon be at home. God bless Johnny! I miss him, and it will be a joyful day to me when he arrives."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CONCLUSION.

THE next morning Paul called to inquire after the health of Jennie Dexter. Mrs. Dexter, who had become quite an admirer of the true worth and sterling integrity of Paul's character, received him cordially, and ushered him into the room where the invalid was seated in a large easy-chair. Jennie evinced much pleasure at the visit, and, as she looked at the visitor who had perilled his life to save hers, the thankful feelings that welled up in her heart found expression in words of deepest gratitude.

During the visit, which proved both pleasant and profitable, the case of Bill Saunders was discussed, and it was arranged that an effort should be made to induce him to sign the temperance pledge, and also to furnish him with employment. This plan was afterwards carried into execution, and, seeing the real interest taken in his welfare, Bill exerted himself to show that he was still worthy of sympathy and respect. He commenced attending meeting regularly, and appearances

betokened that his future life would be peaceful and pleasant.

"There is also another question in regard to our deliverer," said Jennie, "upon which I have pondered deeply. Had he been drowned, in the generous act of saving our lives, what would have become of him? Would he have been saved?"

"He would have been saved from *all* his sins," replied Paul.

"That is one of your favorite expressions," said Jennie; "but my thoughts did not run in that particular channel. I asked myself, how could such a man get into heaven?"

"As I told you, — by being, first of all, saved from his sins," replied Paul.

"Your favorite expression again," said Jennie, smiling. "But our pastor would say that such a man could never enter there."

"What!" exclaimed Paul, "not after being saved from his sins?"

"Well, I hardly know what he would do with him after that. I certainly wish he could become pure and holy, and yet enter the paradise of God. I have prayed earnestly that he who saved our lives might not be lost."

"Might not be lost," repeated Paul. "But he is already lost, — lost in sin; and what the Saviour is going to do is to find this lost man."

"Already lost!" said Jennie.

"Yes," replied Paul; "already lost. The world is lying in wickedness; the people are lost in sin and unbelief, and Jesus came to seek and to save that which *was* lost. So the Bible says."

"You are right," said Jennie, "I have read it a thousand times, yet never thought of its true meaning before."

"If men were not lost in sin," added Paul, with much feeling, "Jesus would never have come on earth. But God's children, like wandering sheep, had all gone astray, — were lost in wickedness, — and Jesus came to save them from sin; and he will do it. Not all the powers of sin and Satan can defeat his glorious mission. God is on his side, and he will be crowned yet again, — not as before with a crown of thorns; but with an immortal, fadeless diadem, that shall speak of a complete victory over sin; and a ransomed world, saved from all iniquity, shall mingle with their hosannas, the exulting song, —

> "'Bring forth the royal diadem,
> And crown him Lord of all!'"

"I earnestly hope it may be so," said Jennie.

"And I certainly do," added Mrs. Dexter, who had hitherto taken no part in the theological discussion.

Many doctrinal points were introduced by Jen-

nie, and Paul was both surprised and highly gratified to witness the manifest fairness with which the once bigoted mother spoke upon the subjects.

Paul's visit, however, was not wholly one of pleasure; for, among other topics of interest, the conversation turned upon the Methodist clergyman.

"I thing you are not personally acquainted with our pastor," said Jennie.

"I am not," replied Paul. "I suppose you all like him."

"Oh, yes," said Jennie; "he is well liked, I believe. He is a very interesting speaker."

"And an excellent man, I understand."

"One of the best of men," replied Jennie.

"And a true Christian, I am told."

"He is," replied Jennie. "But he is quite young and inexperienced. There is however, one beauty in our system, and that is, if a pastor does not suit one church, he is removed the next year to another locality, and, profiting by his experience, he can do better elsewhere. Besides men of less mental acquirements can accomplish much more by a system which need never keep a pastor in one locality after he has given them all his valuable thoughts."

"But his wife must always be a wanderer," said Paul.

"True," replied Jennie; "but then she must follow her husband wherever his duty calls, with the

conscious satisfaction of knowing that she is aiding in the work of our Master. I do not consider it such a great hardship."

"But," said Paul, "after you have formed the most loving attachments in one place, you must leave them all, and go elsewhere, knowing that all your new loves must be given up like the old ones."

"I grant it," replied Jennie; "but I should follow my husband. If his love and the good of the cause did not compensate me for all my sacrifices, I should look into my own heart for the cause, unless, indeed, my husband had deceived me."

. . . . . .

Uncle Tim and Paul occupied but a few days in changing their place of residence. When they were fairly settled in the neat little cottage, Uncle Tim could hardly contain himself for joy. He would look at Paul, as much as to say, "Now I'm with you for life. How he will smooth the pathway of my declining years!"

Paul now exerted himself more than ever to build up the church, and, with the additional aid of Uncle Tim, an impetus was given to the cause in Rockville that betokened unlooked-for prosperity. The conference meetings were becoming more and more interesting. The one on Sabbath evening filled the small chapel which could hardly hold the members of the Sabbath

school, and congregations that assembled at the preaching service. Uncle Tim was in his element. Mr. Franklin was in a constant state of rejoicing, and everything connected with the church showed great temporal and spiritual prosperity.

During the excitement, Mr. Franklin, who was a very practical man, after consulting with Uncle Tim, took advantage of the unusual interest, and had a special meeting called, at which enough money was pledged to defray the expense of placing a steeple and bell upon the chapel, as well as enlarging its capacity by an addition to its length, and Paul's salary was increased one hundred and fifty dollars.

It seemed at first as though this liberality upon the part of Paul's parishioners might dampen the ardor of some; but, instead of such a result, those who had given became still more zealous, from the fact of their having invested some of their treasures in the cause; and the true revival increased in interest.

"Now," said Uncle Tim, who always put the church in the foreground, "don't let us permit this *popular gale*, and all our labor, to prove simply a *gale of wind;* but let us, at once, let down our net, and endeavor to fill our vessel with real fish. Let us become fishers of men."

Urged by Uncle Tim, a strong effort was made, and, before spring opened, the number of church-members was almost doubled.

The young Methodist pastor was also busily engaged in a revival, and it was weeks before his house was furnished ready to receive his bride. Paul had been so constantly laboring for the church, that he had no time to indulge in useless regrets, and, as a natural consequence, he had regained his wonted cheerfulness and serenity; and one morning, upon being told that the marriage would take place next day, he merely remarked that he wished the couple much happiness in their new relations, adding that the bridegroom bore an excellent character, while the bride he knew to be worthy of the best man on earth.

In the afternoon Paul took his usual walk, and, without much thought of where he was going, he passed into the grove. It was a beautiful, and unusually warm day in autumn, and, after strolling through the grove, he seated himself upon one of the rude benches, where he could look off upon the water, and enjoy the beautiful scenery. He had been seated some minutes, and fallen into a revery, from which he was suddenly awakened by hearing a footstep behind him, and, looking round, he saw Jennie Dexter, looking, as he thought to himself, just as good and lovely as ever.

"Ah, I've caught you, have I!" exclaimed Jennie, merrily. "Where have you kept yourself for the last month? So you really thought to cut the acquaintance of mother and myself. You are doubtless very busy with your people;

but then you ought to be neighborly. Mother and I met Uncle Tim this morning, and he promised to call upon us this afternoon. What a good old man he is! I love to look at him, and when I met him to-day, I wanted to kiss him so much that I actually did, right in the street. What a happy man you must be, Mr. Mason, to enjoy, almost constantly, the society of such a noble Christian! His face is the very picture of the heaven in his soul. He says his time has been so much taken up with your church, that he has neglected to attend any of our meetings; but I told him I was coming to one of your conference meetings, and then I shall hear him once more. I shall go, Providence permitting, day after to-morrow evening."

"But your wedding is to-morrow," broke in Paul. "Will your husband come with you?"

"Mr. Mason," exclaimed Jennie, "I do not understand you. What in the world are you talking about?"

"Why, about your marriage to-morrow."

"My marriage to-morrow!" repeated Jennie. "Pray tell me whose wife I am to become so soon; for I am somewhat interested."

"Perhaps I have been misinformed," replied Paul. "Is not to-morrow the day appointed for the wedding?"

"Mr. Mason, are you insane, or are you trying to quiz me?"

Paul stared in surprise; but finally stammered out, "I perceive, Miss Dexter, that I have been misinformed. You are not to be married so soon."

"Do, for mercy's sake, explain yourself," said Jennie; "for I am really in doubt as to your sanity."

"Well, then, when are you going to be married to your new pastor?"

Jennie saw through the whole mystery, and, seating herself upon the rude bench, she burst into a merry laugh, as she exclaimed, "Who could have reported such a ridiculous story? And could you, Mr. Mason, think so ill of me as to suppose that I would be guilty of marrying a man who would desert, for me, one who has waited four long years for him to complete his studies, and become the pastor of a church?"

"You wrong me," replied Paul. "I never knew that he had even thought of any one before he saw you. I thought you were to become his wife. That impression is also current among the circle of my friends."

"And now," exclaimed Jennie, with another merry laugh, "I suppose they will become firmly convinced that our pastor has suddenly given me the mitten, and taken another for his bride. But how long has this absurd story been in circulation?"

"It was reported soon after your pastor came here."

"What, before the accident?"

"Yes," replied Paul; "and when I was struggling in the water to save your life, the thought was constantly in my mind that I was trying to save the life of your pastor's future wife. And, to speak plainly upon the subject, I have often thought it strange that you did not instantly inform him of the accident; but I have been still more surprised that he had not so much as thanked either Mr. Saunders or myself for rescuing his affianced bride."

"And have you never expressed your surprise to any one in regard to what you deemed his strange ingratitude?"

"Never until now."

"Well, Mr. Mason, I will venture to say, that, omitting Uncle Tim, there is not another besides yourself, within the circle of ten miles, who would have shown so much forbearance, and you deserve a great reward."

"Do you really think so?" asked Paul.

"I certainly do," replied Jennie.

"Then," said Paul, "I will call upon you for my reward."

Jennie looked up in surprise. The expression of Paul's face and his manner were not to be misunderstood, and her confusion became apparent; for, although until then entirely un-

expected, she readily guessed the favor that would be craved.

Paul took her hand in his own, and —

But the author is not partial to love scenes.

When Paul and Jennie entered the room where Mrs. Dexter was seated, neither smiled; but they looked exceedingly well pleased with the general state of affairs.

Mrs. Dexter looked up, and, seeing the expression of their faces, as they stood hand in hand before her, she let fall her knitting-work, which was instantly cared for by a kitten which had been lying quietly upon the hearth-rug. While the kitty was getting the yarn into a glorious snarl, Paul and Jennie unsnarled a little entangling alliance which they wished to consummate after obtaining the consent of Mrs. Dexter and Uncle Tim.

Contrary to the expectations of Paul, the mother at once gave her warm approval of Jennie's choice: "For," she added, "although at first prejudiced against you, I have learned to prize your goodness of heart above all other men."

At this moment a knock was heard, and, going to the door, Mrs. Dexter invited Uncle Tim — for it was he — to come in. As the old man caught sight of Paul and Jennie, who were standing hand in hand in the middle of the room, he simply looked at the couple without saying a word. Recovering

himself, however, he rubbed his eyes, and looked again first at one and then at the other. When he found the use of his tongue, he said, softly, —

"My children, do I see clearly, or am I growing blind?"

"You are not growing blind at all," replied Paul; "but you see clearly that what we want, first of all, is your approving blessing."

Uncle Tim wiped his eyes, after which, taking both by the hand, he gave them his benediction.

A few months after, there was a wedding at the enlarged chapel, at which the new bell was rung for the first time. Rev. Charles White performed the interesting ceremony, after which Paul and Jennie went to Uncle Tim's little white cottage, in which they were to set up house-keeping, and where they were, that evening, to receive their friends.

Uncle Tim was almost beside himself with happiness. He attempted to do the honors of the house, and ushered in and welcomed the many friends who came to congratulate the newly married pair.

Mrs. Dexter was not very talkative, but looked calm and happy. Mr. Franklin and wife were there, lending a helping hand around the house. Mr. Franklin's comicalities were not wanting, as well as a valuable present, which he stoutly averred was entirely the gift of his wife, as he should never have thought of such a thing.

Mr. Gray, Mr. Cole, and Mr. Smith were present, and offered their hearty congratulations with the rest. Mr. White looked very happy, as well as his wife Lucy, who was accompanied by little Lucy, now in her seventh year, whom Jennie told to come and see her very often, as she liked just such good little girls.

Johnny Cole, just returned from California, very gallantly kissed the bride, and nearly shook Paul's hands and arms off in his exuberant joy. Bill Saunders, now thoroughly reformed, was also there, enjoying himself with the rest.

We must not forget to mention Mr. Joseph Brown, who could not be prevailed upon even to enter the house.

"Come," said Warren, who was passing in at the gate, "come, Mr. Brown, why don't you go in?"

"Don't approve of the match," replied Mr. Brown.

"Don't approve of the match!" repeated Warren. "Why, best match in the world. This kind of matches is made in heaven."

"Look here, Warren," broke in Mr. Brown, "do I want to marry Jennie Dexter? Did you ever know me to marry Jennie Dexter?"

"Can't say as I ever did," replied Warren, hardly able to restrain his mirth.

"And yet," continued Mr. Brown, "in the very face and eyes of all this, you —"

"Good-day," interrupted Warren, "I must hurry in."

Poor old crusty, grumbling, discontented Joseph Brown! after all there must be, away down in your heart, a certain warm spot, or you would never have been so kind to your lame boy, whom you have kept at school until he is now ready to enter the counting-room of the Rockville Manufacturing Co. as assistant book-keeper.

When it began to be whispered that Paul and Jennie were engaged, many people were curious to know what course the latter would pursue in regard to her religious duties; but, after she was taken into the new church, it became known that Mrs. Dexter herself had advised her daughter to ask leave to withdraw from the Methodist church; and Jennie had ceased to be a member of that denomination soon after the engagement.

Mrs. Dexter had intended to remain, through life, in the denomination where she had received her first religious impressions; but certain intensely sectarian members of the church at once evinced their extreme zeal for the cause by waging a constant warfare against the mother for allowing her daughter to leave; and, as a natural consequence, the mother defended not only herself, but her beloved child. The young Methodist clergyman, who was not only a true Christian, but a man of good common sense, endeavored,

in various ways, to stop this species of petty persecution; but all in vain; for the zealots, without knowledge continued their efforts to reduce the mother to a state of humble repentance; but this only caused Mrs. Dexter to add to her defence of herself and daughter a most determined defence of Paul and his church.

This, however, increased the zeal of the persecutors, and the next step was for Mrs. Dexter to investigate Paul's faith, and, seeing its great beauty and consistency, she began, at once, to defend it against all assaults. The result of all this commotion was, that soon after the marriage of Paul and Jenny, Mrs. Dexter applied for admission into the new church, where, as she afterwards expressed it, she began, once more, to feel at home.

We will not pretend to say that Mrs. Dexter and Jennie did not sometimes miss the fiery zeal of their former denomination; but, as each often affirmed, the great beauty of this joyous faith which they had espoused more than compensated for any loss.

"Were I to join a Christian denomination on account of their great zeal," said Jennie, "I should, of course, prefer the Catholics to all others; but as I wish for what I consider the best faith, or that most in accordance with the Divine Word, I am, I trust, in the path of my Christian duty."

And now, dear readers, as the author has disposed of all the principal characters of this tale, with the exception of Charles Gibbs, whom he has entirely lost sight of since his imprisonment, he here bids you farewell, hoping that ere long he may again greet you in another story taken from the common walks of life.

THE END.

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